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BY

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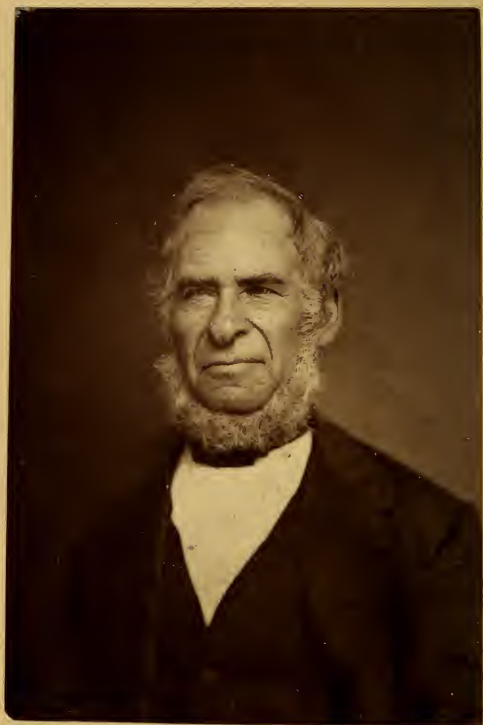
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





Rev. M. P. Squires.

BARNWELL, S. C.

THE
GREAT MYSTERY:

GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH,

AND OTHER DISCOURSES.

BY

✓
REV. M. R. SUARES,

OF BARNWELL, S. C., AUTHOR OF "THE SABBATH" AND OTHER POEMS.

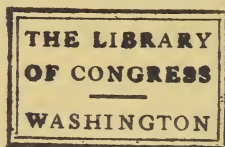
"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant
with the house of Judah."—JER. xxxi. 31.

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This Volume

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO THE

*MINISTERS OF THE BARNWELL AND SAVANNAH
RIVER ASSOCIATIONS, SOUTH CAROLINA,*

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

THE author is a Hebrew by birth, and was born in the town of Beaufort, South Carolina, on the 11th of August, 1812. His father was an excellent Hebrew scholar, and for some time officiated in the synagogue in Charleston, South Carolina. He died in the same city when the author was about four years old. There were, in all, eleven children,—seven sons and four daughters. The author is the fifth son. He providentially attended worship at the First Baptist church in Charleston, South Carolina, just immediately succeeding the death of their highly distinguished pastor, Dr. R. Furman. At the age of fourteen he professed conversion, and in his sixteenth year was baptized in the First Baptist church in Charleston, by Rev. Dr. B. Manly. In his seventeenth year he sailed for Providence, Rhode Island, to study for the ministry. He arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, about the 1st of May, 1832, and immediately commenced his studies at South Reading, Massachusetts, about ten miles from Boston. Here he remained two years, and then entered Brown University, Rhode Island, under the presidency of Dr. F. Wayland. On his return South, he taught in several academies,

and finally engaged in the ministry. He cannot enter into details. He has been much afflicted, and in the full vigor of his manhood, found his usefulness seriously impaired by a bronchial affection. To this may be added partial deafness—which finally became total.

He makes no apology for publishing these Discourses—except that his friends have frequently asked him to print a volume of Sermons, which they might have as a memorial. It was his intention to revise these sermons, but the state of his brain is such that intellectual effort fatigues him. He hopes, however, that imperfect as some of these sermons are, they, as a whole, may afford the same pleasure and profit to the reader as he experienced in preparing them.

M. R. S

BARNWELL, S. C., April 20th, 1875.

DISCOURSE I.

THE GREAT MYSTERY.

GREAT is the mystery of godliness. God manifest in the flesh.—
1 TIM. III. 16.

TO ONE accustomed from his infancy to believe in Christ, as God manifested in the flesh, the subject may not seem so mysterious, so perplexing; because he may have been familiar with it from his childhood, at a time when he may never have thought much upon the subject. But at a time when the Apostles made a confession of their faith—when they taught to persons accustomed to reason on every subject, and who would not accept any thing, except on reason—the divinity of Christ was, undoubtedly, one of the grandest mysteries ever introduced into the world. It stands alone in solitary grandeur, without an example, and we must not, therefore, be surprised that, when its claims were asserted by the Apostle Paul, the Greeks—the philosophical Greeks—denounced it as foolishness. There is, undoubtedly, a moral grandeur in His mission, that He who made all things, the Father of our spirits, the Creator and Owner of this vast globe, He who rides on the wings of the wind, and makes the stars His

lamps, and the lightning His anger, and the thunder His voice, and the ocean His pillow, should so divest Himself of all His royal majesty and become one like ourselves, sin excepted, dwell with man, be a partaker of his physical infirmities, or suffer hunger and thirst, be insulted, derided, spit upon, scourged and put to death, is a transaction without a parallel, a mystery too profound to be contemplated by man, or by angels. So sensible, indeed, was the Apostle of this fact, that he made no effort to conceal it. He could not reason upon the subject, for he had no power to grasp it. There were no data on which he could construct an argument. He believed the mystery, though he could not comprehend it. He believed it—for to him it was the power of God and the wisdom of God. He was once a persecutor. He had taken public measures to punish the followers of this delusion, as he supposed it to be; but the mysterious appearance of Christ to him on his way to Damascus had taught him another lesson—had revealed to him the mystery of Christ's power; and he became submissive—not from any logical deduction—not from reasoning or conviction of an unanswerable argument—but from the invisible Spirit of God, who bore witness of Christ by convincing him (Paul) that the Messiah was God manifested in the flesh; that this was enough for him to know, and that such was truth, and that his knowledge could extend no further than this.

There is mystery, too, in the birth of Christ. He is said to be born of a virgin, without sin; that His birth was supernatural. The mystery is in His conception

and birth. In that case, He partook of the nature of the human race and the nature of the Holy Spirit. So He became human on the part of His mother, and divine on the part of the Spirit. He became human because He could not make a sacrifice for sin unless He became such ; for were He all Spirit, all divine, He would be incorporeal and indestructible—He could not die ; and were He all human, and not God manifested in the flesh, He would be an unrighteous person, like ourselves, and could not make an atonement for sins. The death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin was an open exhibition, a public confirmation of what took place in the chancery of heaven. It was a sacrifice which, in its moral aspect, took place before the foundation of the world. The personal appearance of Christ in the flesh was a condition upon which the power of God was to be more generally displayed for the redemption of man. Without the body of Christ there could be no visible sacrifice, and without God in Christ there could be no atonement. The divine and human nature of Christ were essential to the efficacy of the sacrifice. Such a thing, you see, has never occurred before, and will never occur again. It is one of the mysteries of heaven locked up from the knowledge of man on earth. But I do not think it will be a mystery to him hereafter. I think he will be able to comprehend it in part, at least when he becomes like God, when he shall see Him as He is. I think his mind will grasp all the details of God's plan of redemption—and what is now dark and unintelligible will be revealed to him in the plainest light. Nor is there any hardship in forbid-

ding his knowing this mystery on earth. There is always a pleasure in progression; and could we on earth grasp all the mysteries of godliness, there would be nothing left for us to contemplate in heaven. We should have perfected our knowledge on earth, and as there would be no progressive improvement hereafter, heaven would lose its attraction.

The mystery of God manifested in the flesh is not an exception, for there are other things equally mysterious. The growth of a plant, the wind that blows, and the magnetic needle, are mysteries. Man is a mystery to himself. He cannot understand those secret principles that give life and activity to mind and body. He cannot understand why the universe of matter and mind are united, and yet each mind and each particle of matter is perfectly independent. As yet, we know comparatively little. Science has been struggling for years, and how few are her conquests! The world still lies outstretched before her in illimitable grandeur. If the laws of physical and mental science baffle us, though they are more immediately the field of our investigation, why should the mystery of godliness be objectionable? But the divinity and humanity of Christ are not altogether out of the reach of our capacities; for although every thing is not God, yet God is in every thing. We recognize the presence, the wisdom, and the power of God in the sun, in the moon, in the ocean, in the lightning, in the warbling bird, and in the blushing rose; but more especially in man, who is made after His own image, and in whom, in dim outlines, we see His attributes; but more visi-

bly and unmistakably in Christ, who knew no sin, and by virtue of this holiness became God,—that is, God in essence. The infusion of His divinity may be long or short, according to the purpose of God. In the person of Christ we see the most perfect innocence; we see a power that was supernatural; we see that by a word He raised the dead, stilled the tempest, changed water into wine, gave eyes to the blind, speech to the dumb, fed multitudes with a few loaves and fishes, raised Himself from the dead, was seen of men and angels, was preached and believed upon, and by the exercise of His power sent the Spirit to consummate what he had so gloriously begun. Here is brought in a very narrow compass the mystery of His religion and the grandeur of His Godhead. If He be less than God, it is idolatry to worship Him; but angels worship Him in heaven; they pay Him homage. That cannot be idolatry which God sanctions, and which He commands.

But there may be some confusion in your minds on this subject—and let me give you an illustration which may aid your conception. Suppose, for example, I had power sufficient for my purpose, and I infused my power of speech, of mind, of strength, of body, into a bird, so that the bird should preach as I preach, think as I think, and exercise the power that I exercise,—in fact to be myself in essence, though a bird in shape,—would it not be just to say that I was manifested in the bird, and that the bird had two natures—one peculiar to itself as a bird, in shape, in wants, and necessities,—and one peculiar to me as a man? Now let

us transfer this illustration to the case in point. God from the beginning having unlimited power, and able to do any thing which He wills, but willing nothing but what is good, did provide a sacrifice for sin, which sacrifice He made pure from sin, original and actual, and by virtue of His power infused Himself into the person of Christ to the extent necessary to make the atonement; and that by virtue of this infusion, Christ became holy, free from sin, and by enjoying the attributes of God, He scanned the thoughts of men, raised the dead, and performed all that God could do. Now it must be affirmed of such a Person that He was God manifested in the flesh, or God's humanity. There can be no other conclusion. He was man, because He had our nature; He felt fatigue and hunger, but at the same time He was God, just as the bird in question is a bird in shape and necessities, and human in capacities. In this aspect of the case there is no contradiction to what John says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Christ was with God from the beginning, because God had consecrated Him with His essence as a fit subject for the atonement; and in view of this, Christ is said to be a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Christ was God, and God was Christ, one and the same in essence, and indivisible. So that if it be Christ who created the world, it was God also in Him who did it. If there be any difficulty in understanding this subject, that difficulty rests with ourselves, and not in the arrangement. God could not reveal Himself to us in any other way to be under-

stood : being a Spirit, we could not identify Him unless we were all Spirit ourselves ; but we being corporeal and spiritual, He assumed that nature and condition best adapted to our present mode of existence. No other revelation of Himself could have been practicable.

But there is nothing, after all, in this transaction that should stagger our faith. We can see how God may be manifested in the flesh—but the great mystery is, why should He do it? Why should He so act for man? The mystery here is the mystery of His love, which transcends our conception. God may and can manifest Himself in any form He pleases. He manifested Himself to the Israelites in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. He manifested Himself to Christ at His baptism in the form of a dove. In all these cases it was God manifested in these forms. The mystery is not in the manifestation of God in the person of Christ simply, but in the atonement, in the amalgamation of the divine and human nature of Christ, as two elements necessary to the redemption of man. The wisdom of this amalgamation is so profound, that we look at it with astonishment, the same as one ignorant of mechanics would look upon the operations of a steam-engine, because he cannot understand the relation which the parts sustain to the whole ; but teach him, let him grow familiar with it, and that which was mysterious will appear plain. Now God manifested in the flesh is a mystery only to those who are in the flesh, who cannot comprehend its spiritual mechanism on account of present imperfec-

tions. But the saints in heaven understand it in part, and are rejoicing over their discoveries; and it will be our turn, after death, to comprehend something of the same mystery. There must be an expansion of the spiritual faculties to comprehend this sublime science. The outlines of God's manifestation in the person of Christ may be taught here, the necessity of the atonement, and the grandeur of its object; but any extended acquaintance with the mystery of redemption must be taught in heaven.

We must not deny that God was in the person of Christ; because the evidences in this case are as clear and strong as we could desire them to be. It was God in Christ that made the atonement efficacious, though we are ignorant of the full manifestation of His power. We see a part of God—but the fullness of His wisdom and glory are beyond our reach. In nature we see God, but not all of God. We see only so much of Him as our capacities can comprehend. All beyond the natural eye and the most powerful telescopes, are mysteries, not to God, but to ourselves; because we are not able to comprehend them. Were those objects brought nearer to our visions, aided by more powerful telescopes, we might be able to extend our visions further, and learn more. The milky way would not have appeared to Herschel as golden dust, had he the powerful telescope of Sir John Rosse, but systems of stars. God has revealed Himself to us in the humanity of Christ, but we cannot comprehend all of Him. Our spiritual visions and telescopes are too feeble to reach the majesty of that height to which He has soared in

the world's redemption; and we must be, like Newton, content to gather the mere pebbles of His manifestation, while the full glory of it shall lie in unapproachable grandeur before us.

Though we cannot see all of God, still we see enough of Him to arrest our attention, engage our sympathies, and absorb our thoughts. In the person of Christ He has approached us. He speaks to us. We feel His presence and power, and we are drawn to Him by the force of a moral attraction. We are more immediately influenced by that which is near than by that which is remote. Our conceptions are magnified, not so much by the real vastness of the objects themselves, as by their immediate proximity to us, and the influence which they exert over us. On this account the planet on which we live is one of absorbing interest to us—not because it is larger than other planets, but because it is our home, and because we are identified with it, and because we are familiar with it. We look upon its vast oceans, its volcanoes, its lakes, its rivers, its forests, its mountains, its sky and seasons, with peculiar interest, and feel that if no other existed, it were enough for us, and that in it we can find a thousand motives to be grateful to our Maker. The satellites that revolve around Jupiter do not afford us any pleasure, simply because they are too remote, while our own satellite is gazed upon with inexpressible delight. Had God retained His original remoteness—had He circled above us, like some of the most distant stars, too far to be seen—we could feel but very little of His moral influence. The vastness of that distance between Him

and ourselves would have excluded all knowledge of His saving power, and the moral grandeur of His character would have remained a secret. But by approaching us in the person of Christ, by coming down to our comprehension, by assuming a sensible form, by speaking and sympathizing with us, by warming us with the beams of His benefactions, He has awakened an interest in us that can be measured only by the vastness of His intellect.

Although God manifested in the flesh is a mystery, yet we, who contemplate it by faith, feel that it has a life-giving power; that it enlists our feelings and enchains our affection. Its power to crush out sins, to mould us into the image of God, and to turn the current of our affections into the channel of divine love, prove its divine origin—its adaptation to our necessities. Our spiritual wants harmonize with its provisions, and we feel the adaptation of the Gospel of Christ to our necessities, as the thirsty man water, or the hungry man food. From motives drawn from this necessity, we accept the statement that God was manifested in the person of Christ, to do for us what we could not do for ourselves,—to redeem us from the curse of the law. The evidences of God's humanity in the person of Christ appear satisfactory to me. He came in the fullness of time—the time prophesied that He should come. He came when there was a general expectation that He should come. He performed miracles of the most singular character, such as were never known before; and these miracles, too, were performed with a word; and in some instances He healed those whom

He did not see. He knew the thoughts of men ; He raised the dead to life, and asserted His power to raise Himself,—and did raise Himself from the dead. Now it may be asserted that the prophets did the same thing in part—that the leper by them was healed, that the dead were brought to life. We assent to this. These miracles were necessary to give authority to their teachings—to inspire confidence in God. But there was this distinction : that while the prophets, in the name of God and in the application of means, healed, Christ performed the same by a single word, by His own authority. The bones of Elisha had the power to quicken the dead body of a robber thrown into his grave, but these bones of the prophet could not quicken themselves ; but Christ raised Himself—not only so, but glorified Himself—and in the presence of five hundred persons, ascended on high. When Elijah was taken up to heaven, it was done by a chariot ; but Christ, without artificial means, rose by Himself majestically, fixed the time of His resurrection, and acted in every respect like a God—as He who had supreme power to give or take life, to calm the seas or agitate them, to rock the earth or to still it, to stop the sun or bid him roll on in his glory, to call angels to do His bidding, or chain devils in hell.

Such are the things we see in His life, which come to us authenticated by the most credible witnesses,—by men who have no motive in deceiving, and who spoke what they saw, and whose testimony was corroborated by others. Josephus says that there was such a Person as Christ, and He is represented as performing

many wonderful things. On Mount Tabor, during His transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared to Him, and there was a voice heard: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." At the river Jordan, during His baptism, the Spirit assumed the form of a dove, and the same expression is made use of: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." In the sepulchre an angel was seen by Mary, saying: "He is not here, but is risen." Several days after this, He was seen of His disciples, conversed with them, gave them official instruction, promised the outpouring of the Spirit,—and on the day of Pentecost this prophecy was fulfilled by the conversion of three thousand. He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, and that many who heard Him should live to see its fulfilment. All these predictions took place in the very manner described by Him, showing that He had as much control over the affairs of the world after His death as before it,—that all power was given to Him on earth as in heaven. We regard these facts as conclusive—as proving that whatever mystery there may be about the arrangement, that God was really manifested in the person of Christ, and that Christ in the manifestation of that power was God.

The opponents, however, of God's humanity, deny the resurrection of Christ. They assert that such a thing is unnatural; and that if He rose from the dead, the evidences are not as clear and conclusive as they ought to be. The objection urged here is that Christ did not show Himself in public after His resurrection; that to make His resurrection unequivocal, He

ought to have appeared in the market-places and showed Himself to His enemies, and not to His friends or His disciples. Such an objection weighs nothing, and can be urged only on the grounds of prejudice. It was natural that Christ should show Himself, first, to His disciples, and none others. Supposing, in our recent struggle, General Lee had been killed and buried, and miraculously rose from the dead,—would any man of common sense suppose that the most suitable persons to whom he should show himself would be his enemies? By no means! General Lee would go directly to his leading Generals—to his army—and not to his enemies! To those he would go, first, who fought shoulder to shoulder with him; who shared his danger, and to whom he was devotedly attached. To these he would go first—not merely from feelings of friendship, but from motives of policy. His presence would encourage them in their struggle—in the trenches—in the battle-field—in their marches. They would think that his resurrection was a divine interference, an approval of their cause, a sanction of heaven, an endorsement of their struggle, and a pledge of success. The moral effect would be to stimulate to greater exertions. If Christ had not shown Himself, first, to His disciples, it would have defeated the object He had in view. They were already believers in Him, and they needed this last great, crowning evidence to establish them, so that not a shadow of doubt might dim the horizon of their faith. This He accomplished—and hence the cheerfulness with which they embraced every form of suffering for His sake. Besides, had He

shown Himself first to His enemies, they would not have believed Him; and if they did, they would arraign Him again, and cry: "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" And if the reason be good for Him to show Himself in public places at His first resurrection, that reason will be equally good to show Himself at His second resurrection; so that He might be crucified a number of times—rise a number of times: all of which might be unknown to His disciples, who, above all others, should know it. It would be bad policy to make His enemies the depository of this fact, who had every motive to conceal it. The contingency of two or three crucifixions and resurrections of Christ would neutralize prophecy, which makes Him die but once for the transgression of His people.

There are some who deny that Christ is God manifested in the flesh; or they say that Christ is nothing more than a prophet, a good man, teaching morals and enforcing them by a blameless and irreproachable life; and that His death has no virtue to wash away sins; and that His life was intended to stimulate to deeds of virtue, humility, patience, and love; and that He came merely to serve as a model of human perfection. Many of the Hebrews admit this, and the Unitarians go no further than this. To deny that Christ is God manifested in the flesh, is Judaism, no matter by what name you designate it. Unitarianism and Judaism are here one and the same, and identical. The only difference is that the former believe that He who is spoken of as the Messiah by the prophets, has come, and the latter do not. Yet the Hebrews admit that the Person

called the Messiah is above reproach—a Man of unblemished integrity—who, by rumor, performed many miracles; but that He is not the identical Messiah whom they expected. Had Christ, in addition to His miracles, restored the Hebrews to their political independence, He would have been received as the Messiah. It was owing to His failure (though intentional) just in this one particular that the Hebrews rejected Him. To elevate that people, however, to a civil distinction was no part of His plan. It was a thing foreign to His arrangements, and He was rejected. But the rejection does not prove that He was not God manifested in the flesh; for the weight of evidence is much stronger in His favor than against Him. If, in a case of disputed identity, three persons out of four testify to it, and one not, and that one forms his conclusion from pre-conceived opinion or prejudice, the court will accept the testimony of the three as positively conclusive. In the case of Christ, every prophecy bears testimony to His identity. In Him all the prophecies are fulfilled. The Hebrews give the only dissenting testimony, and that testimony is the result of pre-conceived opinion. The verdict of the world is that Christ has come, and every day's history confirms this decision. Public opinion, formed under impartial investigation, is generally correct; and when given in support of a Scriptural truth, renders all attempt to destroy it futile. Truth is the offspring of the Eternal mind; we may enhance it by embracing, but can never crush by opposing it.

Our knowledge or comprehension of a law does nei-

ther make that law more or less efficient. Our understanding its principles may enhance our pleasure, but can never add any thing to its inherent power. The lightning flashes and flits along the horizon, and shatters the sturdy oak, and scathes the tall pine, and consumes the lofty dwelling, just the same now as it did before Franklin demonstrated the fact or solved the mystery that lightning and electricity are identical. And so the sun darts his rays upon us, makes the earth glow in beauty, warms it into activity, and dispenses his benefactions as liberally as though science had never demonstrated the fact that he is not a vast ball of fire, but a luminous vapor. The stars twinkle as beautifully in the heavens as though we had never known that their light is identical with that of a candle. And the earth moves gloriously on, performing its diurnal and yearly revolutions, as though Copernicus had never discovered this fact. And there is power in the lightning—in the tempest—in the sun—in the earthquake—in the magnetic needle—in gravitation—in the ocean—whether there are mysteries connected with them or not. And so there is power in the divinity of Christ—a power which is as palpable as the light of the sun, and which, though mysterious, is nevertheless true, because we feel it and know it; otherwise the conquest of the atonement would be inexplicable upon any human reasoning, and would become yet a greater mystery than the divinity and humanity of Christ. Julian, the apostate, did every thing in his power to crush out the mystery of godliness; but this royal apostate failed. He brought his influence, his

wealth, his learning, his authority, his ridicule, to silence it; but it still advanced with unexampled success. He expended a fortune to rebuild the second temple, in order to defeat prophecy, but flaming fires rushed from the bosom of the earth, and thwarted his base designs. On his dying bed, when all hope of living had fled, and his feet were ready to tread the shores of the unknown, he exclaimed with his dying breath: "Oh! Nazarene! Thou hast conquered! Thou hast conquered!"

To say that the death of Christ involved no mystery, would be gratuitous. We see the objections you might urge against it—but we do not consider them valid. You might ask me, why should any sacrifice be made at all? Why should God, who is so great, condescend to disturb Himself about man, when there are many other worlds larger than this, and which may be inhabited by a superior race of beings? But such an argument is irrelevant. It is not a question as to what God may do, but what He has done. We must know beyond doubt who the inhabitants are that occupy the other planets; whether they are angels, or whether they fell as Adam did—and if so, under what circumstances. And we must further know whether the law of generation exists there as here; whether they die as we do here; whether sin is hereditary, and whether the inhabitants are, like ourselves, morally unable to work out their redemption. All these facts must be understood first before we begin to reason upon the subject. Were I disposed to conjecture, I might say that the other planets are the abodes of sin-

less creatures, to which the good on earth are destined; but as an argument, it is worth nothing.

Besides, we must not estimate objects by their size, but by their intrinsic value. Athens, in Greece, was a small place, but her glory was unsurpassed. This planet is certainly smaller than some others, but her population may be prospectively superior. We may arrive at a higher destination. The inhabitants of the other planets may be stationary—we are progressive. Sir William Herschel in his cradle is a different thing from Herschel, with telescope in hand, gazing on the stars, and fixing their revolutions. Franklin, crawling upon his knees in infancy, is a different thing from Franklin, with kite in hand, bottling the lightning. Dr. Kane, helpless upon his mother's bosom, is a different thing from Dr. Kane in the Arctic regions, leaping from iceberg to iceberg, in search of Sir John Franklin. Professor Morse, in his infancy, is a different thing from Morse at his battery, communicating his thoughts by electricity. These mental conquests teach us the wonderful power of the human intellect; and we do not know to what vast distinction that intellect may arrive when unencumbered by the body, which now acts as an incubus to its development. So let us say no more about the other planets, but about that which we do know. It is therefore useless to conjecture; and if you cannot understand how Christ is the humanity of God, it is no special fault of yours, because it was never intended that you should understand it in the flesh. There are very few of us who can follow the mathematician in his calculations about the

eclipses, and yet it is none the less a fact that eclipses do take place, and at a time predicted, though we are ignorant of the process of the calculation. Let us be as reasonable on this point as we would be upon others, and more especially so, as the mind of God in its operation is so much superior to ours.

That Christ was God's humanity, is one of those subjects which we cannot comprehend, or reconcile to the known ideas of reason; and we must accept it upon the statement of Him who made other things equally mysterious to us. The assertion that Christ is God's humanity, is supported by evidences of the most conclusive character; and these facts demand our assent precisely the same as the predictions of the astronomer demand our belief; for the prophecies relating to Christ have been as accurately fulfilled as the predictions of the astronomer, only with a higher degree of science, as the time for the appearance of Christ was not only more remote, but more complicated, in its fulfilment, than the predicted occurrence of an eclipse. The astronomer had to deal with the laws of motion, and the prophets with the laws of volition. The former had to deal with mind and matter—the latter with moral causes and effects through interminable series of ages. The astronomer required a mind drilled in the science of numbers, and the prophets required the inspiration of the Deity. The prediction of the astronomer is the result of mathematical knowledge operating upon the laws of motion—and the predictions of the prophets are the results of God's calculation wrought out through inspired agencies. The prophe-

cies relating to Christ would not have been fulfilled, had He come in any other character than God manifested in the flesh. It was necessary that He should embody the attributes of God in Himself; and hence we find Him nobly responding to all that was predicted of Him, and by which He has established unequivocally His identity. Nor does it affect the question as to how this was done—for in this lies the mystery. We certainly know that He gave eyes to the blind—that He healed the sick—that He raised the dead—that He raised Himself—and that His life, amid its darkest scenes, was untainted with the shadow of a crime. All His miracles were performed by a word. He was God as to His power, and man as to His form and necessity. He was not an angel—for He was in shape a man. If He did what no one could do but a God, then He must have been God manifested in the flesh.

There is an objection which I wish to notice :

It is thought by some, with regard to the atonement, if Christ be God, how can God suffer when He is not the transgressor? Would it not seem to conflict with the idea of the supremacy of God's happiness? For the remotest thought that God is susceptible of pain would destroy the idea of His happiness, and that for Him to suffer for a moment would make Him cease to be God.

The objection here arises from a misconception of the person who makes the atonement. It is not God Himself who makes the atonement, but Christ, in His humanity, sanctified by His divinity,—from which di-

vinity He derived all the strength and virtue necessary to make an atonement for the sins of the world. If Christ was merely human and sinless, He could make an offering for one individual, but no more. His divinity sanctified and consecrated His humanity, and so made His death meritorious to wash away the sins of the world. In order to make the subject plain, so that you may understand me, I will give an illustration: Suppose my veins were opened, and I was to make an atonement for the sins of another man: I would die as soon as the blood was drawn from me, because my blood was limited, and could make an atonement only for one; but suppose the blood of another man was let into my veins—I could then die for two! Now suppose there was an inexhaustible fountain of blood, and that no quantity drawn from it could exhaust it, and this fountain of blood was in direct communication with me: then the blood from my veins might flow on forever, and I make an infinite atonement. Now what this fountain of blood would be to me, the divinity of Christ is to Him, in supplying Him with moral efficacy to atone for the sins of the whole world. It is not, therefore, God in Christ that makes the atonement, but the humanity of Christ, impregnated with divine strength to sustain the guilt of an apostate world.

Objections might be made to the effect that Christ, being sinless, suffered innocently,—that a person should have been selected, like ourselves, who was guilty. We answer to this, that the attributes of God, which were very essential to be known to us, could not have been developed or made perfectly manifest in their at-

tractiveness through a sinful medium. There was needed a perfect humanity, with a conscience pure, with an affection untainted, and with a will immaculate. Through any other medium, the attributes of God could not have been displayed in kind, and the moral effects of the atonement would have been neutralized by this defect in the arrangement. It was only humanity in its sinless perfection that could answer the law, or give a satisfactory answer to the all-thrilling question: "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?" With the divine attributes all fully developed in the person of Christ, He became an acceptable sacrifice for sin. God accepted Him as such, and through Him the fall of man is to be reclaimed. Sin is to have no more dominion over us who believe in Christ. A new order of things is established in the economy of Grace. The will of God is more palpably brought to our view. We gain a clearer conception of the magnitude of God's love, the profundity of His wisdom, and the majesty of His justice. In the person of Christ we see God, in the grandeur of His moral character, struggling to turn back the current of sin, and to restore to man something of that peace which his progenitor had forfeited. And, so far, the manifestation of Himself in Christ has been successful. The temples of heathen gods have become desolate. Human sacrifices have been abolished; and wherever the mystery of godliness is felt, the human race rises in importance and moral beauty. We may not be able to reconcile the crucifixion of Christ with the justice of God, which calls for our condemnation and execution, yet it is nevertheless true

that God, in the person of Christ, becomes the life, the hope, the peace of our redemption. The coming of Christ was the fulfilment of a grand prophecy—the hope of the Church and the world. He was the desire of all nations. Zion was to rejoice in Him, and the whole earth to be made glad. Our hopes, our joys, all centre in Him. By Him our sorrows are lightened, our affections are softened, whom, though we do not see, yet we love Him, and, believing in Him, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

“Let Him be crowned with majesty
Who bowed His head to death,
And be His name exalted high
By all things that have breath.

“Jesus, our Lord, how wondrous great
Is Thine exalted name!
The glories of Thy heavenly state
Let all the earth proclaim.”

DISCOURSE II.

THE MORAL POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

THE world by wisdom knew not God ; it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.—1 COR. Chap. I. 21.

THE text contains a positive declaration, viz. : that the world by its wisdom knew not God, and that God in His wisdom instituted the preaching of the cross, as a means of saving those who believe. The subject is one of peculiar interest and importance, and deserves a candid consideration.

If we leave revelation out of the question, and approach the teachings of the philosophers of ancient time, we shall find, that though their views in some respects may be rational, yet upon the whole there is much that is dark and contradictory. It is true that some of these philosophers insisted more upon morality than many of the Jewish teachers ; but the presumption is that they were indebted for the first draft of their moral ethics to the Hebrews, who, in their dispersion, scattered in their pathway a knowledge of divine revelation. The sublime doctrine of the resurrection and future judgment, which was shadowed

forth in the Jewish revelation, was more ardently taught and pertinaciously insisted upon. The confusion in their theory lies in the object from which their chief felicity is to be derived. They were able to feel the necessity of a future felicity, but they could not see enough to explore the true sources of that felicity. It was wrapped up in clouds, and darkness far beyond their comprehension, and there was a longing within for something purer and holier than they yet were familiar with. This sentiment led them to represent the Deity under various forms, and to people the region of fictitious bliss with deities of their own. Hence, we have the complex and contradictory character of Jupiter, the chief deity of Greece and Rome. He had no fixed moral nature ; but like the chameleon, changed his moral complexion to suit the tastes of his worshippers. We find him at one time pandering to the vilest passions of men, and at another time hurling with his red right hand the thunderbolt of vengeance to crush the guilty. At one time we see him looking humanely on suffering humanity, and at another time stifling the cries of pity with the most ingenious torture. At one time we find him exercising an overwhelming power, crushing empires with a nod ; and again, so imbecile as not to protect his own kingdom. The character of their inferior deities was no less repulsive. Mars, the god of war, found pleasure in nothing but blood, and carnage ; and so popular was he that his temples were crowded with worshippers. If we turn to the licentious Venus, or the jealous Juno, we shall find temples erected to their worship, and divine honors paid

to their memories. Each individual was at liberty to select, as an object of worship, the deity, whose nature was more in harmony with his own passions. It is on this ground that we must account for that promiscuous blending of right and wrong, that unbridled licentiousness, that Vandal-like spirit, that recklessness of all the rights of persons, and society, which inundated the world before the introduction of Christianity. Under such a system as this, where the standard of morality is so little elevated, where the passions roam unchecked by law or example, the most dreadful scenes will greet you as you travel over this moral waste; and you will feel deeply that the world in its wisdom knew not God.

That there is a Being infinite in power, the rude and untutored child of nature may believe; and the more cultivated may carry their speculations yet further. They may look into the bright face of the sun, and admire that golden light which he scatters over this earth. He may look upon the moon, smiling in the softness of her light, or upon those glittering stars that deck the vault of heaven. He may sit down in the vernal season and admire the beautiful roses that greet him in his walk, or the sweet melody of birds; from this scene, his soul glowing with love, may look from nature up to nature's God; but yet he could not say whether this beautiful earth and those stars and moon and sun were the productions of many minds, or of one. He may in his perplexity call science to his aid; and she may tell him that the light of a candle is identical with that of a planet, or under the same law; but this would prove only unity of design, and not

that all he had seen was the work of one infinite mind. They may by the aid of reason and science arrive at the conclusion that there is but one God, infinite in power and wisdom; but it would baffle the combined skill of both to say what relation they sustain to this great Being, and what course of conduct would be most acceptable to him. Even here, however, I am conceding more than facts would justify; for in that period distinguished above all others for literature, dignified with the name of golden age, we find numerous different names attached to the Deity. Some regarded him as slothful and inactive, indifferent to the interests of this world; supposed that changes took place without his consent; that he was a mere creature of necessity, destitute of wisdom, liberty and power.

Viewing the subject in this light, or as it presents itself to us, it requires no effort to see that a system, so confused and contradictory, could not well reduce itself to order and beauty without an express communication from heaven. Socrates and Plato were evidently models for the age in which they lived. They reasoned well, and I question whether any, unaided by revelation, could have done better. But even these two philosophers were not satisfied, and longed for further light from heaven. They were like men travelling in a dark and stormy night through unbroken wastes. They could see only as the flashes of the lightning gleamed around them, and all again would be impenetrable darkness. The bright beams of the sun to light up their footsteps, to cheer their hearts, and

give certainty to their progress, was all that was requisite to add to their safety and peace of mind. Hence, when the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings, when with those wings He fanned away the stormy clouds of ignorance and superstition, and permitted the splendor of heaven's light to fall on this sin-stricken earth, these longings for further light ceased; and when from the lip of the sin-distressed is rung the inquiry; "Where might I find him for whom my soul longeth?" the answer to this interesting question is given; "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." The world at present seems satisfied with the theology of Christ. Enough has been revealed to satisfy the lawful aspirations of the soul, and the most gifted philosopher now bows in reverence to the teachings of Heaven.

No less confused and dark were their views of the future state of man. If we shall go back to remote ages, and explore the antiquity of the Bramins, and the Perses, to whom the Greeks were indebted for the elements of their philosophy, we shall find, it is true, the soul's immortality acknowledged; but only on the sublime theory of a universal soul, that mystically impregnates man at his birth with its eternal essence, to be again resorbed after the death of the body. Or if we consult the pages of Egyptian and Arabian mythology, we shall find nothing said of the future condition of man. All beyond the grave is wrapped in impenetrable darkness. Although the immortality of the soul was believed to some extent by philosophers, yet we find so much contradiction among themselves that

we are necessarily led to question the correctness of their reasoning. The truth is, the immortality of the soul cannot be positively proved by any mode of human reasoning. It is one of those truths which we feel, and the influence of which comforts us; but what is the precise nature of that soul, what is it that constitutes its imperishable essence, is a subject as far above human comprehension as the stars are above the earth. There may be a conviction of its truth, a strong innate feeling that we shall exist hereafter, that the soul is impregnated with the elements of eternal life;—

“Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality.”—

Yet there are no data on which an argument can be founded. We may speculate, we may say that matter is not necessarily perishable, that the soul of man is composed of fine atmosphere, or fire, or that numerous elements enter into its constituency, yet all is mere conjecture.

“One thinks the soul is air; another, fire;
Another, blood diffused about the heart;
Another saith the elements conspire,
And to her essence each doth give a part.”

The world in its wisdom will ever feel itself mocked in its attempt to define the soul's immortality. On this sublime subject, it must ever be kept in a state of suspense and uncertainty. Under the Jewish dispensation there was a shrinking of the soul back upon itself at the prospect of death; because there was an uncertainty as to its destiny. Men could see one

end of the soul's immortality resting on the earth, but the other, pointing heavenward, became invisible in the distance, and they ascended with trembling steps, because they knew not on what its summit rested. Hence, the preaching of the cross of Christ was intended to do that for them, which they could not with all their wisdom accomplish for themselves, viz.: bring life and immortality to light; not however by reasoning, but by revelation. There is now no trembling, no recoiling at the prospect of the future—

“The soul secure in her existence smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.”

It is not, however, the mere abstract knowledge of God to which the text refers. It has a more practical meaning than this. It evidently alludes to a knowledge that is experimental and not speculative. When the world with all its boasted wisdom could not save man from the power of sin, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Philosophers felt that sin was an evil; that men were under its influence; that it struck its root deep into the human heart, and that it was the source of inexpressible evils; but how to check it, how to counteract it; how to appease the wrath of an offended God, against whose moral laws sin is committed, how to satisfy the law; and yet save the sinner, were questions which they could not solve. The sinner, laboring under a sense of conscious guilt, can find no comfort by consulting their philosophy. The law speaks to his sin-polluted heart in tones of thunder. It forbids him to

hope for mercy, and the soul, terror-stricken like the wounded hart, leaps frantically, but all in vain. The poison of sin rankles deep within, and there is no earthly remedy. The guilty may lacerate his body; he may give his first-born to atone for his sins; he may perform laborious pilgrimages; but after all, he will feel that these acts of self-torture can give him no quietude, that the soul, still bleeding under a sense of sin, asks, "When shall I appear just before God?" I know that the force of superstition sometimes soothes these disquietudes of the mind, and the worshipper feels a momentary joy in his devotions; that the Pagan, sacrificing his white heifer, and throwing incense on the flame; that the Mahomedan bathing himself, and turning nine times to his holy Mecca; that the patient Hindoo, abstaining from animal food, and pouring his benedictions on the Ganges, think that they are just before their gods. But all with them is a matter of delusion; the soul is still unblest, unforgiven by Him to whom alone they are responsible. It is just here that the wisdom of the world fails—fails to answer the all-thrilling question, "What must I do to be saved?" This was a question which could not be satisfactorily answered by any human system. It has passed from many a lip; the old and young have asked it; the rich and the poor; the wise and the ignorant; but never could an answer be found till Christ made it a faithful saying, that he came into the world to save sinners. On the cross where he expired there was shed forth a light so penetrating, a wisdom so profound, a power so great, a love so fathomless, a

sympathy so intense, that the guilty soul is drawn to notice the noble sufferer, and to feel that Christ is the wisdom and the power of God to them that believe.

If it were possible by any human mode to save man, the restless inquiries of philosophers would have discovered it. Every motive of ambition and humanity urged them on to this ; but we find their systems defective, no matter how ingeniously wrought or eloquently insisted upon. The creative genius of man here failed him ; his resources were inadequate to the necessities of man. His failure was no reflection on his capacities. He undertook to do that which none but an infinite mind could accomplish. He spoke to man of his dignity, of his importance, of his destiny. He clothed virtue in the most costly apparel, and invested her with a divine sanctity. He pointed man to her as the spiritual El Dorado of his hopes, the purifier of his heart, and the ennobler of his nature ; but the motives thus excited were not sufficiently impulsive. They might reform the manners, but they could not change the heart. The tide of corruption within was as turbid as ever ; the fire of passion glowed as intensely. Nor more successful was he when he appealed to the superstition of man, when he pretended to derive a revelation from heaven, and offered rewards to the good, and threatened punishment to the wicked. The fountain of iniquity within still bubbled up ; the streams still flowed in every direction, and their waves dashed on impetuously, ingulfing in their turbid waters all that was morally beautiful and lovely. Never was there a truth in the history of the

world more painfully felt, and more generally acknowledged, than that the world in its wisdom knew not how to reconcile man to God.

To restore the lost image of God to our fallen race was not only a work which mocked the puny efforts of man, but was a task from which angels would instinctively shrink. Their superior intelligence placed them on higher grounds of observation, or else their exalted benevolence would have led some one of them to undertake a mission of the kind. Their feelings were deeply enlisted on this subject. They no doubt wept as they saw man manacled by the power of sin, and every day approaching steadily to that fiery gulf, the flames of which are never to be extinguished—I said, they no doubt wept, and I say yet more, they no doubt prayed, that He by whom and for whom were all things made would hasten his mission, that they might no longer become mourners and pall-bearers at the funerals of lost souls, but ministers to them who are heirs of salvation. And I imagine that when they saw the court of Heaven in consultation, they gathered around in groups and whispered with lively interest, that the long-prayed-for deliverance was at hand. And when they saw the Son of God rise from his throne and hasten to save this otherwise ruined world; when they saw him enter this earth, they could restrain their feelings no longer; they strung their harps and sang “Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth and goodwill to men.” The strains of that song swelled and deepened till all Heaven glowed under its inspiration. And hence the only subject which now occupies the

attention of Heaven is the conversion of the soul ; every other topic is insipid, uninteresting when contrasted with this.

The difficulty which opposed the world's wisdom in reconciling man to God, was its ignorance of the conditions on which God would be satisfied. When two persons disagree, it is not the right of the offender to make the conditions of peace ; the injured person is the most competent one to decide the amount of reparation to be made, and until this is done by the injured person, and communicated to the trespasser, no reconciliation can take place. Such was, precisely, the condition of the persons in question, God and man. The laws of God were violated by man. God became angry with him and threatened to execute him, but suspended his executive power for reasons of humanity. The contest between them was fierce. Man wished to be reconciled on his own terms, and God the offended scorned to accept them ; and thus it stood for ages, until the proposals were read to man from the brow of Calvary. The Saviour came with the olive branch of peace in his hand, and offered reconciliation to man on conditions every way honorable to God and beneficial to man. The human mind is not now bewildered as in former times on this absorbing subject. It is written as plainly as if pencilled with sunbeams. The deep injury we inflicted on him is now more clearly understood. The terrible punishment to which we were doomed appears in an aspect more appalling, and his love and justice now rise up in all their colossal grandeur before us. We now admire that wisdom and

humanity, which, before, we had neither the capacity nor the disposition to understand.

But I have said enough to you on this part of my subject, and allow me to turn your thoughts to some of those features in the Gospel of Christ which the philosophers of Greece considered foolishness.

The first thing which excited their disgust was the simplicity of the Gospel, as well as the character of those who taught it. Their intellectual pride was such that they could recognize nothing as worthy of their attention, which did not originate in some one of their schools of philosophy. Flattered for ages for their philosophical acumen, ruling their very conquerors, the Romans, by their superior intelligence, they became vain. Hence when the Apostle Paul visited Athens and preached the resurrection of Christ and pardon through his atonement, the learned Greeks derided it, and called it foolishness. The simplicity of the Christian system ought rather to enhance than diminish its value. No sensible man despises an invention because of its simplicity. This, with him, is rather a desideratum, provided it accomplishes all that was intended. To pronounce the preaching of the cross foolishness because of its simplicity, when others have found it beneficial in its operation, to say the least, is nothing but affectation, a love for the marvelous, the mysterious, the terrible, and the sublime. Had Christianity been taught by kings and philosophers; had it been paraded through the streets with all the insignia of royalty, attended with national banners and music, instead of a few poor fishermen, they might

then have respected it and become its worshippers, if its service was as splendid and magnificent as its equipage ; but because it was so unostentatious, so simple, so clear in its nature, and so definite in its object, they treated it with contempt. It was no part of the genius of Christianity to clothe itself in unintelligible abstraction—to wrap its teachings in mysticisms—to bewilder the common mind. It had a higher and a nobler mission. It came to seek and to save those that were lost ; and while it was so simple that a child could understand its theory, it was at the same time so profound that angels, with all their advantages, could not comprehend its mystery. The Apostle Paul, whose mind was of no ordinary mould, calls the atonement a mystery, God manifested in the flesh.

But acceding that the Gospel is simple, suited for children and uneducated men and women, yet I for one rejoice in its simplicity ; for, in my estimation, it is an evidence of its greatness. The government of God, extensive as it is, is marked with simplicity. The greatest king or emperor of Russia was the simplest of men. The most powerful minds employ the simplest forms of expression. The application of steam, though the simplest, is yet the most powerful and revolutionary of all physical agents. Turn your thoughts for a moment to the enormous power of attraction, simple as it is ; see through what infinite range that power is felt ; see what mighty masses are whirled about by its agency, from a grain of sand to the mightiest planet that traces its way through the heavens ; and yet all this is accomplished with a still-

ness as profound as its power is wonderful. See, too, the lightning with its terrible flashes, shivering the mighty oak, splitting the lofty pine, like a reed, and scattering battlements, like grains of sand, and yet so simple that Franklin, with a silken thread, confined it in a bottle. Why, the simplicity of the Gospel is its wisdom, its glory, its power, its grandeur, its divinity.

While the Christian faith is simple, and to it we must ascribe in a great measure the prosperity of the world, the advancement of literature, science and freedom, yet some of its doctrines are so original, so bold, so startling as to confound the schoolmen of Greece. By no mode of reasoning can they solve the problem of the doctrine of the Trinity, nor can they comprehend how God can be manifested in the flesh. Here their logic is confounded; their metaphysical speculations cast into the shade; and because they could not grasp this sublime system in its detail, they called it foolishness. Such conduct is rather an evidence of ignorance than wisdom. When Fulton proposed to navigate the sea by the aid of steam, the plan was pronounced foolishness. When it was proposed to travel by steam on the earth at the rate of twenty or thirty miles an hour, the plan was thought by many persons foolishness. When it was proposed to connect the two hemispheres by an electric cable, it was thought foolishness. But what a change has come over men's minds. What was once foolishness is now wisdom, and what was once bold, original and startling, is now the common occurrence of life; and so the erudite Greek, had he lived to see the development of the principles embo-

died in the preaching of the cross of Christ, would have undergone a similar change, and pronounced it the wisdom of God. To ridicule what we cannot fully understand is not an act of wisdom ; for if we act on this principle, we ought to ridicule our own existence, though it is to us a source of so much pleasure. We ought to ridicule the magnetic needle, though it guides the mariner to every quarter of the globe. We ought to ridicule the sun, though he is the source of light, life and beauty. It was never the intention of God that we should understand all the doctrines of the New Testament. If it were so intended, he would have simplified those doctrines, or else enlarged our capacities to comprehend them ; but as he has done neither, it was his intention to clothe them in clouds and in darkness.

Another feature that seemed foolishness in the eye of the philosopher, was the punishment of the innocent for the guilty. There are two conditions on which such a transaction in a particular case may be highly beneficial, both to the law, the innocent and the guilty. The first is that the act shall be voluntary, and the second, that the substitute be superior in wealth, in intelligence, and morality. Such a transaction in a particular case will not compromise the law, but add to its dignity, will not serve as a motive to its violation, but to its better observance ; will not dishonor the innocent, but wreath his memory with imperishable honors. And so in the death of Christ. The case was peculiar. The law demanded that the offender should be slain. The love of Christ led him to inter-

cede. He volunteered to die in the place of man, and being holy, without sin, he became a suitable substitute. The law accepted the offer, because it saw that it would be not only more honored, but that a moral motive would be created by such a transaction as would ensure its better observance; that instead of society losing any of its valuable materials, it would in the end gain more; that instead of the innocent being injured, he would receive a kingdom and a crown, and rule over the noblest of subjects. Here is a transaction in which justice, mercy and benevolence are blended in one harmonious whole, moving on to accomplish two grand results, viz.: the happiness of man, and the glory of God. That we should be benefited by the labors and sufferings of others is not unusual. It occurs in the history of every day. The father labors incessantly. He denies himself. He amasses a fortune, and his children, who shared not his labors, inherit it. The mother studies, cultivates her mind and her heart, and the child enjoys the benefit of that culture. Patriots have fought and bled on the battle-field in the noble cause of freedom, and many perished on the scaffold, and posterity reaped the fruits of their sufferings and their deaths. Is it strange that we should be benefited by the sufferings of Christ, who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich?

Another feature of foolishness was the demand of faith in the doctrines so taught. The doctrine of the resurrection and the trinity was to be accepted, solely on the authority of Christ. The philosophers assumed

that the laws of mind required that such doctrines should be consistent with reason ; they did not so consider them ; they could not see what relation faith in the death of Christ sustained to their redemption. They had accustomed their minds to believe in natural causes and their legitimate effects. They could see no natural relation between the death of Christ and faith in him, as a cause for pardon and eternal life. Their error consisted in misapprehending the genius of the Christian system. That religion is without precedent. It occupies a midway station between Heaven and earth. It stands alone in solitary grandeur, forbidding too near an approach by man. Its genius was shadowed forth under the Old Testament, when the sign of the blood of a lamb on the posts of the doors, was considered a sufficient cause to stay the hand of the destroying angel. It was shadowed forth, too, in the wilderness, when the brazen serpent was erected and consecrated by God as a cause to heal those who looked upon it. There was no natural relation between the cause and effect, but the blood of the lamb and the brazen serpent being appointed by God for a particular purpose accomplished all that was intended, as though the effect was the result of a legitimate cause. The preaching of the cross is an ordinance. The blood of Christ has been consecrated by God as a legitimate cause for redemption, and it will as effectually save the soul that believes on it, as though the relation was natural. Such an arrangement as this clothes the Gospel dispensation with a purity that can never be sullied, and advances more surely and eminently the glory of

God. Any other arrangement than this would rob the atonement of that holy and isolated character in which its real dignity and humanity consist. Obedience to a natural law would draw the attention from the author of that law, and in time all sense of dependence would be lost. We would look upon the effects of that law with as much indifference as we look upon the ordinary workings of nature. Hence the preaching of the cross, demanding faith as the condition of salvation, so far from being foolishness, is an act of the profoundest wisdom—an arrangement which no one could have originated but Him, who said, "Let there be light, and there was light."

Another feature of foolishness in the preaching of the cross was that the sufferings of Christ were too short in proportion to the work to be achieved. We have not the means of ascertaining the precise amount of Christ's sufferings. The duration and intensity of his sufferings far exceed our conception. When men undertake to perform a great deed, they are suffering more or less in anticipation, until the dreadful hour arrives for the execution of their purpose. The atonement of Christ was moral, not physical. He had it in contemplation for ages. It began in the remote cycles of eternity; and hence he is said to be a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The tragical scene of Calvary was familiar to his imagination long before it was executed. He viewed it in all its aspects and relations, and the intensity of his desire to execute his purpose, to put the seal of his blood upon this transaction, could find no language more appropriate than—

“Lo, I come to do thy will.” The atonement was infinite, and its importance and efficacy could not be measured by the duration of time. An infinite sacrifice is immeasurable by time. It would be an act of presumption for any one to decide how long an infinite Being should suffer for the sins of a finite world. Here all calculations are confounded; and it becomes impious to time the sufferings of Christ. Besides, the importance of an act is not to be measured by the time consumed in its execution. Adam was not long in sinning, and yet what painful consequences followed that act of disobedience. A man with the single stroke of his pen may carry sorrow to many a heart; may blast his hopes and his family; may cover his memory with shame. A sudden death may interfere with the policy of a nation, and throw her back for ages. In science, some of the most happy discoveries have been made in a few moments. The importance of an act is to be measured by its intrinsic worth, and not by the time employed in its execution.

No event has yet occurred that should dissuade us from preaching the Cross. No other system has been given to supersede it, and the command to preach it is still binding on us as on the apostles. Its high distinction as the only means of saving man is yet unrivalled. The author of this Gospel well knew that it was the only means adapted to the conversion of the sinner; that it had a language, a motive, and a power that could reach his heart, and bring it in grateful obedience to himself. Nor was he in long suspense. The system of foolishness began to exert a prodigious

power. Its progress was as remarkable as its genius was original and benevolent; and everywhere was heard the inquiry: "Men and brethren, what must I do to be saved?" New trophies every day were added to the preaching of the Cross, until on the day of Pentecost three thousand were converted by the preaching of a single sermon. Some of these not long before may have witnessed the crucifixion of Christ, whose hands might be said to be yet stained with his blood. Time has not yet diminished the virtue of the Gospel. It is the same agent wielded by the power of the Spirit, and is making conquests every day, shaking to its very foundation the empire of Satan and reducing his movements within narrower limits. The fruits of the Spirit are ripening in every soil, and the cause of the once despised Nazarene is advancing with gigantic strides. The world in its wisdom hides its face in silence, while the banner of redemption floats in every breeze.

The preaching of the Cross not only reconciles man to God, but is a powerful agent in the cause of civilization, science and freedom. It scorns and strangles all spurious religions. It abjures all excesses of enthusiasm. It looks mildly, generously and charitably upon the motives of men. It exercises a wholesome jurisdiction over the thoughts, and purifies the heart. It unites its scattered members into a sort of common brotherhood. It gives a more delicate sensibility to our sympathies, and makes us weep with those that weep. It makes us contented with the things that are, and inspires us to hope for better. It seeks to elevate

us in the eye of God, not by the indulgence of pride, but by a poverty of spirit. It aims to make us as near like God as our condition will permit. In every circumstance of life, where it has been preached in its purity, it has never failed to make a beneficial impression. We have seen it preached among the savages, and they immediately threw away their rude implements of war. We have seen it preached among the idolaters, and they have cast away their idols. We have seen it preached among the educated, and they have risen yet higher in the scale of morality, intelligence and humanity. We have seen it preached among sinners, and they have been stricken to the heart, and asked : "What they might do to be saved." We have seen it preached to the Church, and a new impulse has been given to their devotion : the cold in heart were warmed into animation ; the lukewarm were revived into vigor, and the neglected cause of missions roused into activity. It inspires man with a love for whatsoever things are excellent and of good report. It blesses him with a peace of mind, to which before he was a stranger. It moderates his love for a world which is seductive and ruinous to his peace. It elevates his soul, and teaches him that it is nobler to forgive than to resent an injury. It raises him above the power of temptation, and makes him trample those sins in the dust that would otherwise enslave him. It supports him in the hour of affliction ; comforts him in his sorrow ; enlivens him in his solitude ; enriches him with grace in his poverty ; props him up in his old age ; consoles him in his bereavement ; inspires

him with triumph in the hour of death ; and crowns him with a glorious immortality.

The preaching of the Cross, while in our present state, may not make us as holy as we desire to be ; yet it is nevertheless moulding us every day more and more after the image of God. It is sowing in these hearts of ours the seeds of humility, faith, hope and love, and is thus preparing us for an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. How great then will be its triumph ! how many hearts will thrill with ecstasy, and how rapturous will be the song : “ Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory.”

“ Christ and his cross are all our theme ;
The mysteries that we speak
Are scandal in the Jew’s esteem,
And folly to the Greek.

“ But souls enlightened from above
With joy receive the word ;
They see what wisdom, power and love
Shine in their dying Lord.”

DISCOURSE III.

THE EFFUSION OF THE SPIRIT UNDER THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

AND it shall come to pass in the last days, saith the Lord, that I will pour my Spirit upon all flesh.—Acts ii. 17.

THESE are the words of the Apostle Peter addressed to the crowd who surrounded him on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell on them, and they spake in tongues unknown to them before. The crowd was astonished to hear men speak in languages with which they were not familiar. “How hear we,” say they, “every man in our own tongue wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.”

It was under such circumstances that the Apostle Peter standing with the eleven lifted up his voice and

said: "Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these men are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,' " &c.

If you will refer to the 44th chapter of Isaiah and the 3d verse, you will find that a similar promise is there made: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring." Water is intended for the Spirit, and the seed here is intended for Christ, and offspring for those who are born of the Spirit. As if God had said: "Under the Gospel dispensation a great change shall come over spiritual Israel. My Spirit, which has only been dropping upon them, shall now be poured—shall fall in a stream, not only on the Israelites, but on all nations, kindreds, tongues and people. A new era in the administration of my government shall arise. Mount Gerizim and Jerusalem shall not alone be the places where I shall display my presence; but in every place will I be present to bless, and every pious heart shall become a fit temple for the Holy Spirit. The power of my glory shall not be confined to the Jewish nation; but it shall enlarge itself. Many shall enter this new economy, and flourish like willows by the water-courses."

Thus the prophets, Ezekiel, Isaiah and Joel, which latter the Apostle Peter here quotes, seemed inspired

with the happy vision of a great change in the economy of God. The Jewish religion, though good for the time being, shall be superseded by another more comprehensive, more perfect, more universal in its application—there being nothing to add to it, and nothing to be retrenched. It was the ultimatum of God's will to man, and like the glory of the sun, it absorbed within its capacious fulness the Judaistic light of revelation. Hence, when this new economy began; when its light first beamed over Bethlehem; when wise men recognized and identified its heavenly origin; when Simeon thanked God that his eyes had seen the salvation of Israel, the Jewish economy was approaching its end. It began then to give tokens of dissolution. Another holier and brighter light arose in the person of Christ—a fuller and purer doctrine was taught by him—a doctrine adapted to the constitution of man, harmonizing with all his relations in life—a doctrine so complete, that it left nothing to be desired to the all-important, all-interesting question: "What shall I do to be saved?" Thus it found a sympathy in the human bosom. Thus it taught that God is no respecter of persons. It abjured all priestly distinction, and with an eye impartial it recognized the whole human family as occupying the broad basis of a common brotherhood. It taught that God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it. Thus the coming of the Messiah was a new revelation; his kingdom a new kingdom, and it formed a new epoch in the administrative policy of God. By this act God abrogated all the rites of Judaism—all the pomp and splendor of its worship;

and on its ruins has erected a beautiful spiritual Temple, in which the offerings are holy affections.

It was the last day of Judaism when the Saviour expired on the cross. Its death-warrant was then signed by the blood of Christ; for soon the Jewish temple was destroyed, the genealogical records lost; their sacrifices ceased; and they themselves scattered to the four quarters of the earth, without a temple and without a country. While it is strictly correct that the last days refer to the extinction of Judaism, as an essential part of the religious system of God, it refers in like manner to the Gospel economy, as the last and final dispensation of God to man; so that it would not be inappropriate to say: "Thus saith the Lord, under the gospel dispensation I will pour my Spirit on all flesh;" that is, on the human race; for flesh is a figurative expression, as when it is said: "All flesh is as grass," meaning the human race.

And it should be remembered by you, that a prophecy of this character is to be fulfilled gradually, continuously, until its consummation; for the Spirit is not to fall in drops, as under the Jewish dispensation; but He is to be poured, implying an unbroken continuance, as well as suggesting the idea of inexhaustibleness and freeness. Thus the Spirit will be poured on all flesh—all the nations of the earth shall feel his convincing and sanctifying power, and rejoice as those did on the day of Pentecost, in the plenitude of his blessing. Hence, every victory which the Holy Spirit gains over the empire of sin is a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy: for the final triumph or diffusion of the

Spirit is not to be instantaneous; not to be accomplished by a sudden and abrupt revolution; but by successive advances. And although on the day of Pentecost this prophecy was in part fulfilled, in that some of all flesh enjoyed his miraculous and sanctifying agency; yet has that Spirit in his ordinary influence been flowing down to the churches and the world in an unbroken stream, widening and deepening its channel, gathering power in its course, and approaching, though silently, yet truly, to the universal fulfilment of this prophecy. Every accession made to the kingdom of Christ is a pledge of yet greater accession; for the elements which the Holy Spirit has enlisted in his cause are aggressive. The power of the Spirit is an accelerated one. He pours down. He gathers weight and volubility. He becomes irresistible, and the puny restraints imposed on him are swept away like feathers on the surging of a mighty cataract.

Desirous as we may be to know something of that Holy Spirit, whose mission is to conduct this world back to God, yet we must ever remain in ignorance of his mode of existence. It is one of those truths in the science of theology which no finite mind can grasp, and which will ever remain in unapproachable grandeur by man. It was the contemplation of this strange and mysterious Godhead, this doctrine of the Trinity, that overwhelmed the mind of the Apostle Paul; that checked the ardor of his investigation, and forced him to a condition of painful despondency. Great to him, and angels, and the world, is the mystery of the Godhead. We look abroad, and here and there we see

mystery. We look at ourselves, and the same perplexity follows us. We ask Science to explain to us the reason why the magnetic needle points to the north pole, and she is silent. We ask her again to explain to us the philosophy of the wind, and she is silent. Reason suggests that if we cannot understand the *modus operandi* of those objects which we see and feel, and which bear so immediate relation to ourselves, there should be no reasonable grounds for disquietude should we not be able to grasp those objects that belong more immediately to the science of Heaven.

The Holy Spirit, whose influence is to be poured on all flesh, is not an attribute of God—not an element of his existence; but a distinct and separate personage, exercising an office peculiar to himself, yet in essence identical with God, and inseparable in his existence with him, so that if it were possible for God to die, the Holy Spirit would die with him. How these three persons so exist, that they are one in essence, and yet three in person, is beyond the range of human comprehension; and how inexplicable soever to us, it is nevertheless a truth which under another economy we may understand. When Galileo, the astronomer, declared that the earth moved round the sun, instead, as was supposed, that the sun moved round the earth, he nearly suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Romish Church; because to that Church it was a new theory, and the reasons for which it could not comprehend. But when the theory was demonstrated; when science trampled this Romish ignorance in the dust, that which before seemed contrary to reason now ap-

pears as clear as the mid-day sun. It is far from my purpose, however, to insinuate that the progress of science will enable us to comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity. There is no relation between a human and divine science; no analogy between the science of Heaven and the science of earth. We may, however, assert that when we shall become pupils in the school of Heaven; when we shall sit down and be instructed by Christ, we shall see into the philosophy of those truths which on earth were inexplicable to us.

Mysterious as the doctrine of the Trinity is, yet we must accept it on the testimony of Him whose veracity is unquestionable. The Saviour, the founder of the Christian faith, says: "I am he who bear witness of myself, and the Father bears witness of me; and when the Comforter shall come, he will bear witness of me." This witness of the Holy Spirit to Christ was borne on the day of Pentecost. He ratified what Christ had previously said. His outpouring was a promise made to the apostles, and looked for with the same anxiety as the coming of the Messiah was looked for among the Jews. This promise too was made after the resurrection of Christ, and in forty days it was fulfilled in his miraculous gifts. To this glorious event, which the Apostle Peter considers the most illustrious evidence of the ascension of Christ, he refers as a reason for those before him to repent, as the promise of the Spirit was to them and their children. For this reason the Spirit is often called the Spirit of promise, as a person distinct and separate from the Father. The Spirit is said to proceed out of the Father—to be sent

by the Father, and to be distinct and separate from Christ. "Behold I send him," says Christ, "and if I go not away, he will not come." That Spirit descended on Christ—filled him—sanctified him—sustained him in his humanity; and hence a distinction is made between sinning against the Son and the Holy Ghost. "All sins spoken against the Son of man shall be forgiven; but not against the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit did not in his person assume a state of incarnation like the Son of God—that Spirit was not crucified, and rose again from the dead, and ascended heaven. He passed through none of the ordeal through which Christ passed. His sympathies, to be sure, were excited; but he himself was a mere spectator of those tragical sorrows that flooded the bosom of our Saviour. The Spirit stood by to comfort and sustain, but felt none of those blows that fell in such merciless fury on the person of Christ. "I will ask the Father," says Christ, "and he will give you another Comforter." "We have access," says Paul, "in one Spirit to the Father. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. There are three that bear witness, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

The Holy Spirit has an office distinct and peculiar. He is represented as a teacher; "He shall teach you all things." Again, as a leader: "He shall lead you into all truth;" as a remembrancer: "He shall bring all things to your remembrance;" as a witness: "He shall testify concerning me. He shall not speak of himself; but whatever things he shall hear, he shall

“speak, and he will tell you things to come.” In addition to this, he searches into the mind of God; is familiar with the plans of Heaven, and the destinies of men. Hence he abstains from any special effort in striving with those whom he knows that God means to give over to judicial blindness to fill up the measure of their iniquity; while he follows pertinaciously those whom God means to seal unto the day of salvation. And hence the Spirit is said to search all things, yea the deep things of God. “The things of God none knoweth save the Spirit of God.”

It is this third person in the Trinity whom the Father will send on all flesh, and under whose influence the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, and the dry places of the earth shall become pools of living waters. The miraculous gift of the Spirit was absolutely necessary to sustain the divinity of Christ. Without it, Christ could never have satisfactorily proved his Messiahship. The chain of prophecies in this case would have been too short just by one link, which nothing else could supply, and the whole fabric of Christianity would have fallen into ruins. There would have been nothing after the resurrection of Christ as a memorial of his divinity. But the Holy Spirit, coming at precisely such a time, and under precisely such circumstances as predicted; that he should work precisely such miracles as he did; on such an occasion as this, there can be no room for deception; for the apostles did through the agency of that Spirit work miracles. Philip, the evangelist, healed a great number of the demoniacs. The Apostle Paul had per-

formed so many, and his reputation so extensive, that the populace flocked to him ; in some instances bringing the handke. chiefs and aprons of the diseased, that he through these might heal them.

And these miracles, too, were wrought not under circumstances where deception might be employed. They were performed openly in the presence of enemies and friends. They did not imagine, like the priesthood of the Romish Church, that the presence of a heretic would forbid the performance of a miracle. The power of the Holy Ghost was with them, and that power was to bear testimony of Christ ; not before friends, but before his enemies ; and hence the apostle says : "Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not." 1 Cor. xiv. 22. To remove all doubts from the mind of the unbelieving Hebrew, there were to be wonders in the heavens, and blood and fire. Josephus informs us, that there was a star resembling a sword which stood over the City of Jerusalem, and a comet that continued a whole year. It is also said by him, that on a certain night about the ninth hour a light shone round the altar of such a brightness that it seemed like the mid-day ; that one of the massive iron gates of the temple, which took twenty men to shut it, of its own accord opened. It would seem a fable, says he, if it were not so well authenticated, that just before sunset, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. At the feast of Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple, they felt a quaking, and

heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a multitude saying: "Let us depart hence." These were no doubt some of the wonders spoken of. And as to the blood, fire and smoke—those will attest whose blood was shed by Pilate; by Herod; the twenty thousand massacred in Cesarea; the thirteen thousand in Scythopolis, and the fifty thousand in Alexandria. The gift of the Holy Spirit was the climax of evidences in favor of Christ's divinity. His miraculous gifts on the day of Pentecost will ever remain a monument of the divinity of Christ, and the trembling and penitent Hebrew will here find an unanswerable argument for his faith. Like the lofty spire of some house of worship, the body of which may be concealed by trees of large foliage, yet it makes us feel that the broad foundation on which it rests is sure and steadfast. We look up to it with a reverence equal to the majesty of its appearance, and expect it to remain, amid storms and sunshine, the praise of its great architect.

We do not now expect the display of the miraculous power of the Spirit. The object which God had in view is accomplished. Revelation has received its finishing stroke. The great edifice is completed in all its departments. The truths of the Gospel on that memorable occasion have been confirmed. There will be no more gifts of tongues, of miracles, of interpretations, of prophecies, of discerning of spirits to attest the divinity of Christ; for the testimony once being given was intended for all times and for all places.

But there was needed besides this external testimony

of Christ's divinity another of a personal character—a testimony which shall have an immediate connexion with the soul, and may be denominated an internal testimony; a testimony founded on conviction of our sins, and the necessity of such a Saviour. Without these two combined testimonies, the system would be imperfect. It would be deficient in its practical workings. Without this internal testimony, the Christian system would be like a beautiful steam-engine without the power of locomotion. We may admire it for the beauty and symmetry of its proportions; but we could never personally identify ourselves with its operation. As it now stands, it has the power of locomotion. It moves on like a thing of life and energy, overcoming opposing barriers. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, bearing testimony to Christ, and his convincing and sanctifying power in the soul, progressively from age to age, give this great heavenly machine a momentum which it could never otherwise attain. Thus every soul converted is not only an evidence that the Spirit is being poured in his saving power, but carries an additional evidence of the divinity of Christ—an evidence that is a living and perpetual memorial of it.

The outpouring of the Spirit in his saving influence alone is that which we now enjoy, and which is necessary to the consummation of Christianity. The Spirit does not supersede the necessity of the atonement; but he is intended to act in connection with that atonement. He sustains the same relation to the death of Christ that the steam sustains to the engine. The

Spirit puts in motion the death of Christ. He brings that death before the eye of the sinner. He makes him see that price which was paid for his redemption, and forces him to look upon Christ, whom he has pierced. Hence the Spirit convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. The sin of rejecting Christ was revealed by his miraculous power on the day of Pentecost; but that revelation of the sin of rejecting Christ is successively made by his saving influence on the hearts of all who are truly penitent; for it is the Spirit that shows the number, the extent, the malignity of their sins; and it is he who particularly points out to them their guilt, their danger; and it is he who creates within a desire to flee from the wrath to come. The Spirit not only convinces of sin, but saves from the power of sin. He does not at once extinguish the corruption of the heart, but breaks the love and strength of sin, and nurses the soul for the kingdom of heaven. Hence he is frequently represented under the figure of water and fire, denoting the cleansing and purifying process through which he carries the soul. He washes the soul with his regenerating influence, while he disclaims all power in relieving the soul from the guilt of sin. The power of the Spirit is more conspicuously displayed in the conversion of a sinner than in his miraculous gifts. The power of converting was never delegated to any one of the apostles. It was too responsible a work to be entrusted to man—to be exercised at his discretion. It requires an infinite mind to do this with safety to his government. This converting power, were it

granted to man, might be partially and injudiciously applied. It is, I think, a far greater miracle for the Spirit to convert than to bestow the gifts of tongues and prophecies. It is a far nobler achievement of the Spirit to take man dead in trespasses and sins, with an understanding that is blind, with a will that is obstinate, with a conscience that is seared, and transform him into the image of God, than to transfer a small portion of his miraculous power to a few for a limited time. We, therefore, who live in the last days, at this time, have advantages which were never enjoyed to the same extent under the beginning of the Gospel dispensation. We have the original evidences of the Apostolic days, with a cloud of witnesses, and when that Spirit shall be poured on all flesh; when all shall bear testimony to Christ, the triumph of the Redeemer will be complete; the empire of Satan will crumble into atoms; the work of the Spirit will then have been accomplished. What a glorious change will come over the world! How bright and illustrious will shine forth the divinity of Christ! And what thankful incense will arise from countless altars to that Spirit whose agency has accomplished so benign a result!

The assertion that the Holy Spirit has no other influence than that confined in the written Word is inconsistent with the idea of his being poured on all mankind. They are antagonistic ideas. The one supposes that Spirit stationary; the other in a state of motion. It was on this stationary principle that the Romish priests pretended to work miracles. They reasoned themselves into the belief, that as the apostles

had the power to work miracles, that the gift of miracles was still in the church, with all its original power, and as they were the successors of the Apostle Peter, it was their prerogative to work miracles. It was no part of their policy to distress themselves about the saving influences of that Spirit—to them it seemed too insignificant. They wished to clothe the Romish Church with apostolic grandeur—to throw around her the semblance of a high divinity—to clothe her with the power of salvation—to dispense life and death at her option. She feigned to work miracles by the most ingenious and deceptive arts; and many an ignorant and superstitious devotee claimed for her this divine right. But those pretended miracles sank into disrepute; their absurdity could no longer be tolerated, and that which was at first believed by many was subsequently denied by all.

The written word undoubtedly embodies the teachings of the Spirit, and these are the exponents of his mind. But, besides this, there is another power which he puts forth—the power of persuasion. He is, so to speak, an invisible orator. He speaks to the soul. He is the still small voice of God preaching to the conscience, and making the sins of the ungodly pass before them like a panorama. He holds up the dead body of Christ to the eye of the soul, as Antony held up the blood-stained mantle of Cæsar to the eyes of the Romans, and charges the sinner with his death. He shows the ungratefulness of the deed, and the dark malignity of sin. He shows the rich legacy which Christ has bequeathed to them; and with an appeal

peculiar to himself, he moves the sinner to tears. He makes him go and bow beside that bleeding body, and bathe it with the tears of contrition. He makes him hunt up those sins in the inmost recesses of his heart, as the Romans, the murderers of Cæsar, and drag them out from their lurking places, and slay them before God. The oratory of the Spirit is equal to the magnitude of the cause; the greatness of the interest at stake, and the melancholy grandeur of the occasion. Whether he dwells on the perilous condition of the sinner, or on the majesty of God's violated law, or on the dark and malignant character of sin; or whether he expatiates on the ineffable splendor of heaven; or on the painful wailings of the lost; or whether he dwells upon the terrible realities of the judgment day, or on the mercy of God, he never fails to excite attention; and often the sinner trembles in his presence, and falls upon his knees, and asks imploringly: "What must I do to be saved?" Into what insignificance does this great orator of God throw the most splendid oratory of man? And to confine his power to the mere written word is only to circumscribe that power within narrower limits. It is to localize it. It is to suppose that he has no extemporaneous powers—no faculty to seize passing events in the providence of God to enforce or illustrate his written truths. It is to deny to him any further fund of knowledge or genius to move the passions of men. It would be an act of injustice to any living orator to circumscribe his influence to his written production. All living orators proclaim to have a power independent of their written

composition. When Patrick Henry so ably defended the Baptist preachers in Virginia for their liberty of conscience, the people were so overcome with the splendor of his defence, that they bore him in triumph on their shoulders through the crowd. But had he simply read the defence, the effect would have been different. It was the subject and the occasion which clothed it with such interest. It is for this reason that extemporaneous efforts are more effective. It is for this reason that the apostles and Christ preached in this way. And we can hardly suppose, that the wisdom of God would have led him to supersede altogether this mode of preaching in the case of the Holy Spirit. When *Æschines* read to his pupils the celebrated speech of *Demosthenes* on the Crown, they admired it; but, says he, "You ought to have heard him."

And so to form a just opinion of the power of the Spirit, we must hear him. We must listen to those silent, yet powerful arguments which he brings to bear upon the sinner's conscience. With what eloquence he urges his cause! How he demolishes every foundation on which the sinner rests for security! How he transports him by the splendor of his imagination to the very gates of heaven, and makes him hear the sweet notes that fall from angels' lips! or bears him headlong to the pit of despair, and terrifies him with the wailings of the lost! The miraculous gift of the Spirit and his written production will not be again re-enacted in the history of the world; but the pleadings of that Spirit will be poured on us like a river, and sometimes like a cataract, overwhelmingly grand, ter-

rific and irresistible. Had he less power, the oratory of our passions could not be silenced ; the power of sin could not be broken. What, but the oratory of the Spirit can subdue the sinner's heart? And for this reason we are accustomed to look to his agency to further the grand design of the gospel dispensation ; for however faithfully and eloquently this gospel may be preached, if the Spirit be wanting, such preaching will be like sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. So important indeed is the agency of the Spirit to the success of the gospel, that the Saviour, the founder of Christianity, did not enter upon his public ministry until he was anointed by the Holy Spirit. And so was it with the apostles. They were not fully qualified with the requisite graces until the Spirit enlightened their minds, corrected their views, consecrated their hearts, and sanctified their affections. It is not strange, therefore, that at the crucifixion of Christ they fled from him ; but when they received the Holy Spirit, they were transformed in their affections ; they faced the torrent of persecution, and died like heroes in defence of their faith. The Apostle Paul said, that nothing could separate him from the love of God ; and Peter, who before denied his Lord, now feels himself unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord. There was a vast difference in the views, feelings, faith and devotion of the apostles before and after the descent of the Spirit. In their mission to convert the world, they cautiously abstained from ascribing any success to their individual labors. Paul says : I have planted, and Apollos watered ; but it was God who

gave the increase. Indeed, were it not for the active agency of the Spirit, I do not see how the Christian Church could have sustained itself; how it could have prospered as it has done; how it could have supplanted all other forms of religion when brought in competition with them; how it could have survived the sword of persecution; how it could have made the very instruments of its torture advance its principles. Surely these results are not to be looked for under ordinary circumstances. You do not see these results in the Jewish religion. You do not see them advancing by religious conquests over the hordes of heathens that surrounded them. You do not see the gathering of the people around the standard of Judaism. Their religion has a form; but that which gives it power is wanting. It lacks the transforming energy of the Spirit. The only system of religion over which God presides and spreads the wings of his protection is that of a spiritual Christianity. The Romish church, in the days of its civil glory, was never protected by God—those days when kings bowed before her sceptre, and did her homage; when like Mahomed she carried her religion in one hand, and her sword in the other. The Spirit of God was never poured on her. Those priests, who dragooned the Protestants into their faith under penalty of confiscation and death felt not the Spirit of God. That church wore the name of Christianity; but it was Satan clothing himself in its habiliments. The spiritual church of Christ, on which the Spirit has been poured, held on its course amid the sternest persecution. It was the burning bush in the wilderness,

which could not be consumed. The Spirit was in it to sanctify, to bless and sustain, and all the powers of hell could not crush it. When the reformation dawned, the church came forth from its hiding-places. It no longer concealed itself in dens and caves. It came forth, and stood up shoulder to shoulder with the reformation. It was to them a Pentecostal feast. They saw the promise of God breaking into fulfillment upon their vision. The dark cloud of persecution, which enveloped them for ages, was breaking into sunshine. The printing-press came to their aid, and threw its glorious light around in every direction. The march of the Church was onward. Liberty to worship God was its watchword, and the banners of Protestantism floated in triumph over Germany. The church came forth out of this moral chaos, and breathed more freely the air of religious freedom. No power on earth could have preserved the Church of God. That Church is a spiritual fabric, composed of spiritual materials—to be nourished by spiritual elements; to be guarded over by a spiritual agent. Its foundation was laid in blood—the blood of the Son of God. The materials were made of the tears, the groans, the watchings, the sacrifices of the faithful and martyrs; and God is its architect. The Church is his temple. He dwells within the Holy of the Holies. The sacred fire burning on its altar is the Holy Spirit; and if that Spirit be withdrawn; if its fires become extinct, the Church becomes annihilated. It may have a priesthood. It may have altars. It may offer sacrifices; but it cannot be the Church on which God promised to pour his Spirit in the last days.

The outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh is nothing more nor less than the diffusion of Christianity. It is contemplating those changes when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters the deep. And although the effusion of the Spirit in this sense has not been literally fulfilled; although all flesh have not as yet seen the glory of God; although the heathen have not as yet been given to Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; although the Jews have not as yet been brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles; yet there are signs in the existing state of things, that they shall be. There is coming a period when the Spirit will be poured on all flesh; when a nation shall be born in a day; when thousands shall be converted under the preaching of a single sermon; when the palace kept by the strong man's arm shall be torn from his possession. "For it shall come to pass in the last days," says Isaiah, "that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it." The Christian Church is the mountain of the Lord's house, and it is here that God will display his glory and receive the homage of his people. The Church of Christ is to be the home of the spiritual seed of Abraham. All opposition to this Church is to be overcome; for she frowns down upon the hills. The Lord has founded the Gospel Zion, and the world will flock around her gates with songs and everlasting joys upon their heads. Under its glorious and resplendent light, the wisdom of philosophy is to be eclipsed. Under its

pure and elevated spirituality, the heathen temples are to become desolate ; for it is to have a name and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

“ Lord send thy word, and let it fly,
Armed with the Spirit’s power ;
Ten thousands shall confess its sway,
And bless the saving hour.

“ Peace, with her olives crowned, shall stretch
Her wings from shore to shore ;
No trump shall rouse the rage of war,
No murderous cannon roar.

“ Smile, Lord, on each divine attempt
To spread the gospel’s rays,
And build on sin’s demolished throne
The temples of thy praise.”

DISCOURSE IV.

THE STABILITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Thou art Peter, and on this rock I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—Matt. xvi. 18.

I DO not believe that Peter was a suitable person, on whom Christ should build his church. The Saviour's sagacity was too penetrating to lead him into this error. He would have compromised, both himself and church, had he done so. He was able to read Peter's character through; saw his weak and strong points, and knew that it was not in harmony with Heaven's designs to build so important a thing as his church upon a frail and fallen creature; that even upon himself, the building of the church, though sustained as he was by supernatural agencies, would require extraordinary efforts to crown it with success. In his imagination he saw the whole of Peter's life—his boldness and intrepidity—his untiring devotion—the fear and trembling that would seize him in the hall of Pilate—his denial of him—his noble confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—and the rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan." These facts were all known to him in the future, and though Peter's qualities were, generally,

known, and favorably regarded, yet they were not sufficiently influential to induce him to build his church on Peter. And the more so, as it conflicted with his own claims, his own designs; for he did not come to build his church on another, but on himself; he would hardly have sanctioned a rival, and sustained him with his authority.

The employment, too, of the third person, instead of the second, tends rather to confirm my conclusion. If the Saviour meant to build his church on Peter; he would have said, and "On thee do I build my church," and not as it is: "On this rock." The confession of Peter himself, is conclusive, for he never at any time assumed any prerogative or superiority over the other disciples. In his Epistle to the church at Pontus, he calls himself a fellow-elder, assuming no higher office than a religious teacher. In his Epistles to the churches of his charge, he does not call himself the founder of those churches, but an Apostle. He seems to repudiate all idea of being the head of the church. In his first Epistle, 2d chap. and 4th verse, he says, (alluding to Christ): "To whom coming as the living foundation stone, rejected indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." Here Christ is represented by him as the living foundation stone of his church. It is worthy of notice that at no time did the apostles regard Peter as the head of the church. The Apostle Paul said, that he was not a whit behind the chief of the apostles. And in his letter to the Corinthians, he claims the honor of establishing the church at Corinth; not on Peter, but on their faith in Christ. He recognizes no supre-

macy, but acknowledges the apostles as co-workers with him, and that there is no foundation to the spiritual temple of God, but faith in Christ, as the chief corner-stone. "Who is Paul," says he, "and who is Apollos, but ministers of Christ?" In all of his writings and acts, he acknowledged no superior but Christ.

The words of our Saviour are explicit, and can leave no doubt on the mind as to whether Peter was the foundation stone of his church or himself. When the disciples were disputing who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, it was then a very proper time for him to settle, finally, all differences, by placing Peter before them, and saying: "He is the greatest;" which he would have done, and ought to have done, if he regarded Peter as the head of the church: But not so; he brought a child and said, "Unless ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Christ says, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Such language would be inappropriate if Christ regarded Peter as the foundation stone of his church: It should be: "Go to Peter, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and he will give you rest." And he says again: "One is your master, even Christ, and ye are brethren." "I am Alpha and Omega." "I am the door, the good shepherd. I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

The nature of the church which Christ came to organize is such, that no one could be its head or founda-

tion stone who was not spiritual and immaculate. The Saviour himself found it necessary to make provisions after his death for a spiritual agent to succeed him, endowed with supreme power to watch over the interest of his church. That Spirit was endowed with the properties of the Deity—his office was to take of the things of Christ and present them unto us—to be present everywhere, in every believer's heart, at one and the same time. No other agent could be found but a divine one to accomplish this successfully. Hence Peter could not have been the proper person on whom to rest the responsibility of piloting the church through the seas of corruption to a triumphant end. That person must possess the mind of Christ; he must be omniscient; he must know the thoughts of the Deity, where and when special influences are to be exercised; how much power is to be employed to effect given ends. Unless, therefore, by some miraculous change produced in Peter, of which we have no knowledge, his nature unfitted him to sustain the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of the church. Unless he possessed divine qualifications—unless he was all spirit, omniscient, all-pervading, like the Deity, the church could not exist long, much less sustain itself, as it has so successfully done, against the long series of persecutions that so violently assailed it.

But it is said that the keys given to Peter is indicative of superiority. If so, then the other disciples possessed equal distinction, for the keys were given to all. Christ addressed them all through Peter. In the 18th chap. of Matth., and the 18th verse, Christ said the

same thing to the disciples: "Whatsoever things ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." If Peter possessed the power of remitting sins, the other disciples also possessed the same power; for Christ says to his disciples in John, 20th chap. and 23d verse: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." If Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost, so were the other disciples, as we are informed by Luke. No inference of superiority can be drawn from this circumstance, since the keys were given to all the disciples. Nor should the nature of these keys involve us in perplexity. The Saviour often indulged in metaphors. Thus he says of himself: I am the door, I am the good shepherd, but literally he was neither; and when he said to Peter, and through him to the other disciples: I give thee the keys, the language is metaphorical. If Christ be a door there ought to be keys to unlock him. The figurative meaning of the keys is the unlocking of the door of redemption through Christ. It should be remembered that none of the apostles preached the Gospel to the world, while Christ was in the flesh; and it was not until after his resurrection that he gave them the right to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. This commission was really the keys, the unlocking of the great heavenly truth, that Christ came into the world to save sinners. On the day of Pentecost, forty days after the resurrection of Christ, Peter was the first who unlocked the door of mercy to a sin-ruined world, and then the other disciples, generally, in their dispersion after the stoning of Stephen. Peter,

no doubt, possessed special qualifications to take the lead, as a missionary, as our Judson had done in Burmah ; but no special precedent was given to him. To preach the gospel, to organize churches, to excommunicate the bad, and retain the good, with the additional privilege of working miracles, were enjoyed in common by all the disciples, and with the exception of working miracles, are rights now exercised by all the ministers of Christ.

The original name of Peter was Simon, but the Saviour changed it to Cephas, meaning a stone. The language is a metaphor, and means firmness, stability, strength. By attaching the figurative meaning to Peter, the subject of our text may appear clearer. Thou art firm, and on this firmness of thy faith in me, as the Messiah, do I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The building of the church of Christ, permanently, does not depend, altogether, on our confessing him, as the Messiah ; for this confession may be fickle, like that of Simon Magus, and the church built on such faith as his could have no permanent existence. The stability of the Christian church is essentially connected with an unwavering faith in Christ—a faith that will peril all—home, country, friends, and even life itself, rather than forfeit the approbation of God, or compromise its principles. Upon such a faith, as is figuratively meant by a rock, will Christ build his church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. On the unbroken continuance of such a faith alone, could the Christian church be established forever. The perpetuity of that faith, however,

could not be confined to one, for at the death of that one the faith would cease ; but the perpetuity of the church depends upon an unbroken succession of faith in his followers. Hence the stability of the church does not depend upon Peter, individually, but upon all whose faith in Christ shall be as firm as his. The faith of Peter is meritorious and influential only so long as he lived. At his death his faith was consummated, and the church needs the continuance of successive faiths to sustain its progress. The Church militant is the foundation of the Church triumphant. It is the fountain that supplies the Church in Heaven with imperishable and sanctified materials to perpetuate the glory of the Redeemer. It is not in the nature of God's economy that Peter's faith shall stand in the stead of others ; for this would des'troy the necessity of individual experience in religion, and the purity of heaven be compromised by the admission of the unconverted. Peter possessed no power to transfer his faith to his successors in the apostolic line, admitting his supremacy to be scriptural, which I deny ; for facts teach us that some of his successors were far from being religious men ; and were the Church dependent on them for its continuance, it could boast of no perpetuity. To say the least, there would be a suspension in the virtue that gave to Peter this pretended distinction as the head of the Church, and in that suspension the spiritual power of the Church would cease. A succession of faithful believers in Christ is the only condition on which he could permanently build his Church.

Suppose, for instance, God should say to the Sun,

“Thou art the source of light, heat, life and beauty to the planets, and on thee shall they continue, and no human power shall destroy them.” This would be all correct ; for the sun is understood to be a permanent thing—a settled fixture for all time. But if that sun, by a fixed law, like human life, shall become extinct in thirty or forty years, the language would be inappropriate and absurd. The address would be put in this form : “Thou art the Sun, and on those properties peculiar to thee shall those planets continue, and no power shall destroy them.” This would imply the succession of other suns, identically the same as the one addressed. Should one of those suns in the order of succession prove to be a globe of ice, the inhabitants of the planets would perish, if no other source of light and heat could be found equal to its predecessor. No less true would this be in a spiritual point of view, if the successors of Peter’s faith were not men of equal piety, zeal, and devotion with himself. But, fortunately, the stability of the Church of Christ depends not upon one separately, but on all combined, priests and laymen, women, and responsible children ; for they, in the aggregate, constitute his church.

We do not deny but that Peter was a warm and devoted follower of Christ ; that his faith was vigorous, and that his zeal sometimes transported him into improprieties ; that he took the lead in his official capacity. His native disposition inspired him to this, more probably, than from any superiority which he claimed, either spiritually or intellectually. A candid investigation of all the circumstances in question will lead to

the conclusion that the Church of Christ is not built on Peter per se, but on the properties of his faith, which are absolutely essential to the perpetuity of the Christian Church on earth. There are parallel cases in the history of the Church where the exercise of just such a faith, zeal, and devotion, peculiar to Peter, saved the Church from annihilation. In all such cases, the faith of Peter is reproduced, not in himself, personally, but in his successors in the Church. The foundation of the Christian Church is laid in the twelve apostles conjointly, not separately, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. The superstructure of that Church is dependent upon those who shall subsequently believe in Christ. If after the death of the apostles no one espoused the cause of the Messiah, the Church could boast of nothing but simply a foundation. The superstructure, the real beauty, grandeur, and glory of the Church, would have no existence at all, and the designs of Christ, with regard to man's redemption would be a nullity. The heathen world would not be given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. There would be nothing in it to excite our admiration, to stimulate our exertions, to enlist our sympathies, to sanctify our affections, and connect our imagination with the infinite and the sublime.

It is not my intention, however, to discuss this subject. We can never be reasoned into the belief that Christ would build his Church upon a human being, no matter how wise and faultless he may be. And its inconsistency is so glaring, so opposed to the spirit of the Bible, that some of the Catholics repudiate Peter's

supremacy, and consider nothing more to be meant than his confession of Christ as the Messiah. We Protestants can see no utility, no wisdom in building the Church upon any other foundation than Christ and the apostles, whose teachings and whose blood form the vital elements of its existence, its success, its glory, its triumph and its immortality.

The Church, to which reference is here had, is the spiritual Church of Christ, the Church composed of those only who believe upon him, savingly, who accept him as the only hope of redemption, and who yield obedience to him. This Church has its members scattered in all denominations, more or less. No one visible Church can claim to be the true Church to the exclusion of all others. Nor is the continuance of a Church, even under the fiercest persecution, a proof of its truth, or the Church against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. The Jewish people on this ground may contend that their Church is the true Church; because, though persecuted, driven as exiles, proscribed and put to death, they still survive, one and the same, and of longer duration than any other Church. And the Protestants might say they are the true Church; because, though persecuted, they maintained their integrity. The continuance of any religious body is no evidence that they are the special and favorite Church of God. I admit that it makes some difference as to which Church a man belongs, because it is his duty to belong to that Church which approaches nearer the New Testament Church; but still, the grand requisition is to be born of the Spirit, for in no other way can Church fel-

lowship save us, no matter how apostolic our creed may be. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and without holiness no man can enter the kingdom of heaven. It is not the intention of Christ to gather all his members into one body in one visible Church. That would be unwise, and under existing circumstances very difficult; but they remain in their scattered state, members of different religious associations, or organizations, that they may act like leaven, diffusing their influence, and accomplishing thereby more good in the aggregate. The United States is composed of many States; each State is independent, with its laws peculiar to itself, as a State; yet each citizen is a member of the Republic; and so there are different churches, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Catholic, Baptist, yet each member of these churches who is truly born of the Spirit, is a member of the spiritual Church of Christ, who is the federal head, and such members constitute the Church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. It is not the name, nor the organization, nor the creed, that makes the spiritual Church, but faith in Christ, the rock. The thief on the cross was not a member of any Church, he made no profession of any creed, yet he had faith, and that faith saved him, protected him against the gates of hell. A spirit that knocks at the gate of Heaven for admission, and urges his claims upon the ground that he belonged to the Catholic Church, or any other Church, without possessing the necessary faith in Christ, will be refused as promptly as though he belonged to no Church at all. I think it is time for us to see that something more than Church membership is needed to save us.

The gates of hell mean the power of hell. Among the Hebrew rustics, who had lawsuits to settle, as it was extremely inconvenient to meet in the city, they met at the gates of the city, and there the civil power was exercised; and from this circumstance gates came to be used in the sense of powers. The palace of the Sultan of Turkey is called the *Porte*, because there, at the palace, the law is dispensed.

The first power directed against the Church was that which Constantine employed to crush out the few who adhered to its primitive simplicity, and who would not yield their faith to the behest of the Pope. Many refused, and some of the noblest of both sexes suffered martyrdom. The tide of persecution rolled on like a flood, and many a pious man, woman, and child were sacrificed upon the altar of this Moloch. But as these perished others would take their places, and so the Church held on, sustained by an invisible power, till their enemies in turn acknowledged their impotency. The recent events in France and Italy are no doubt providential, and are intended to lessen the power of the Pope, so that liberty of conscience may be as free within the walls of Rome, as in these United States. That the light of a liberal Christianity is breaking on the world, is as clear as the noon-day sun. Freedom to worship God is man's heritage, and God, who endowed us with that love of freedom, will foster it. The moral world was for many years in a state of preparation—a state of development for the enjoyment of that freedom—and when there was a fitness, a ripeness in the people to enjoy it, it came as a natural consequence.

Cromwell could not have dethroned Charles, the King of England, unless he was aided by the Puritans. The divine right of kings; the proscription of the dissenters of England; the arrogant claims advanced by the loyalists; the invasion of the rights of conscience, were the principal causes that produced those civil wars, that desolated England. The right of conscience in England is now generally respected. The Church of Christ stood its ground manfully, though it had suffered much. It sowed its seed on this continent. The tree of liberty here took root, and has sprung up and grown to large proportions, and yields a grateful shade to the weary and distressed.

Soon after the Reformation by Luther there was another power directed against the Church—an ecclesiastical power, viz.: the Council of Trent. For eighteen years was this Council in session, forming decrees to exterminate the reformation. The most ingenious plans were formed to accomplish it. They anathematized and excommunicated all who favored it; wars and bloodshed were frequent, and it is said, that the Invincible Armada had this object in view. The Inquisition was more rigidly enforced; the most terrible persecution was carried on in Germany; Bohemia, and the soils of Poland, Lithuania and Hungary were deluged with the blood of Protestants. Holland, France, England, Ireland and Scotland shared the same fate. And what is remarkable, as one religious sect gained the ascendancy, that sect would persecute till the blood of their opponents flowed to satiety. Be it said, however, to the honor of

the Moravians, the Quakers, and the Baptists, that in those dark and trying times they never dipped their hands in the blood of their brothers. Roger Williams has the honor of being the warmest advocate of liberty of conscience. He took the right view of the subject, and with a perseverance worthy of him, rolled back the darkness of ages. John Owen, Milton the poet, John Locke, sustained him; and the ball of religious freedom kept rolling and gathering force, till no one now presumes to persecute. Nothing can be more presumptuous than for one man to decide the religion for another; for all men to think alike, all men must be born alike. One man has as much right to his religious faith as another. Persecution had its origin in the bosom of Satan. Christianity and persecution cannot go hand in hand. The Saviour opposed it in his life, and especially when he commanded Peter to put up his sword. The man or denomination that persecutes is a Cain, and the curse of heaven will be written upon his brow. Persecution has never answered the end designed. It is opposed to that principle of morality that requires us to do to others what we would expect them to do for us under the same circumstances. Persecution has never failed to exasperate the feelings of men. It destroys Christianity, instead of advancing it. It is a foe to society in consigning to death the best men; for none but the best are selected to appease its vindictiveness. As we cast our eyes over Europe, we find all denominations of prominence in the full exercise of their religious rights. The Romish Church has recently lost its temporal

power; but on this account she becomes more Scriptural. "My kingdom," says Christ, "is not of this world." The Church of England is becoming more generous and liberal, and certainly more pious. The Dissenters are advancing rapidly in education, in wealth, in intelligence and piety. The light of redemption in Europe is shining with an increased brilliancy, and an enlightened Christianity has taken deep root in the moral soil of its populace, and the work of redemption moves forward. In our country we see great changes. Schools, colleges, religious papers for old and young, and cheap religious literature are almost as diffusive as the sun-light; while the most splendid pulpit talents are accessible to all. Sin, it is true, abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold; but, nevertheless, the Church moves on, separately, it is true, like the planets, or our states, but all its members recognize Christ as the central Head, the magnet of their attraction, as the way, the truth, and the life, the pillar, the corner-stone of their redemption. In death they are gathered in the bosom of the Church Triumphant; crowns of imperishable glory are theirs, and their unity with Christ shall be public.

The Church now has not a crude infidelity to deal with as formerly. The infidel has changed his ground. He looks upon religion now as a part of man's nature; as something inwoven in his constitution, which he will cherish, and from which he expects to derive all his happiness. When the uncultivated generally embraced Christianity, the conceited wise men of this world could not penetrate into the power of a living

faith ; and its followers were said to be under the influence of priestly domination ; and Voltaire sought to establish a millennium without dependence on God's influence to sustain it ; and the consequence was an age of terror, injustice, anarchy and bloodshed. The truth is, there can be no safety to society that does not recognize God in its religion. Since such distinguished men as Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Bacon, Dr. Gregory, Robert Hall, Dr. Chalmers, Professor Morse, Dr. Good, and Cuvier embraced Christianity—men of high and varied accomplishments—the infidel has become shy about charging the Christian religion as the offspring of some superstitious mind. The infidel falls back, and takes cover under the plea of rationalism.

No man now presumes to say, that Christianity had its origin in the brain of some deluded fanatic. The Hebrews of this age, whose fathers urged on the death of Christ, regard the Christian religion as a most excellent institution. Its generous nature, its humanity, its ameliorating influences, receive their warmest approbation ; and some have contributed to build Christian churches. Such a change seems to favor the idea that the Christian religion is yet to be the most popular. The heathens acknowledge the superiority of the Christian faith ; their religion grows dim before it ; their altars become vacant, and their temples are neglected and forsaken. The rock on which Christ built his Church has grown exceedingly large. Its influence is felt in every zone, and its saving power is acknowledged by foes and by friends. He must increase till all nations shall bow before him.

The reason why the Church of Christ cannot be destroyed is because it is founded in the necessity of our nature, and had an existence co-eval with man, though not demonstrated; and hence to destroy this religion, you must destroy man, who made the existence of that religion necessary. Phidias, the sculptor, produced a statue of Minerva, on the shield of which he had wrought his own image so ingeniously that you could not remove the image without destroying the shield. So the religion of Christ is so artistically wrought in the nature of man, that they cannot exist separately. Man finds in this religion precisely what he desires—what Plato and Socrates longed for, but which they could not grasp, because of the mists and vapors that darkened their vision. They knew that such a religion existed; but they could not find it, so as to appropriate it, and feel its saving power. Were they living, however, in the days of the apostles, they would have seen it, believed it, and felt it, and in the plenitude of their joy, exclaimed: “We have found; we have found it.”

It is for this reason that wherever Christianity goes she carries with her a power—an irresistible power—that makes the soul willing, however repulsive its doctrines may be to the carnal feelings. Each person converted adds power to the church, just as each birth adds to our population; that spiritual birth brings along with it energy, wealth, influence, intelligence, power, and gives the Church a succession of vigorous members. No one presumes that the inhabitants of the earth will all die at once; but that as the old die,

they will be succeeded by others, and that the population will increase rather than diminish : so the power of reproduction will be carried on in the Church. Spiritual births in the Church will be more frequent than deaths, and the wave of membership will flow on till the Church shall become the glory of the world. The reproducing cause may not be so great now ; but the time will come when a nation may be born in a day. No man who regards his respectability in society is now opposed to Christianity. Those who profess it are among the most worthy and intelligent. The discourses of the pulpit, to say nothing of their moral and spiritual power, are becoming more attractive. Men of wealth and learning every day are espousing it. Jonathan Edwards, with his powerful intellect, during his life felt it not beneath him to be a preacher of its truths. Through the force of reason he would approach and storm the hearts of the gifted ungodly. All permanent changes must originate with the mind and affection. Science does not conflict with religion ; they go hand in hand. Truth can never be successfully crushed. It may seem annihilated ; but in the end it will triumph. The Hebrews did not crush out the truth when they crucified the Lord of glory. The corner-stone stood there still in defiant and silent grandeur, mocking their fruitless anger. It rose on the day of Pentecost. The Jewish Sanhedrim met in council, and said : “ The Messiah is a fiction ; ” but th’s did not affect the truth : it still rolled on impetuously, dashing and crushing out every attempt of its enemies. The prophecies rose up in their majesty ; the wonder-

ful works which Christ accomplished stood forth to vindicate his claims; till it became an established fact, that Christ crucified was the power of God and the wisdom of God to them that believe.

There are two kinds of monuments; the one of art, and the other of morality. The former have lived for many ages. We love to gaze on them as memorials of the past—ruined cities—broken arches—dilapidated temples—decayed monuments—crumbling towers—and the shattered and moss-covered Coliseum. They still speak to us of the genius that created them; but they have lost their primitive glory, if not their interest, and the hand of time will eventually waste them away. But not so with those moral monuments which an active faith in Christ creates. It points us to the apostles as the monuments of its genius, who illustrated in their lives the noblest virtues. It points us to the many who have in different ages reflected the image of Him, the immaculate, and of whom the world is not worthy. It points us to heathen lands where the traces of its glorious footsteps are seen in schools and churches and smiling villages. It points us to those homes once miserable, where poverty stalked in all its gauntness, now happy and luxurious. It points us to those countries, once sterile and bleak, that are now blushing like the rose. It points us to those healing, reviving and healthful influences that are transforming this world of wilderness into a paradise. To say that the gates of hell shall prevail against such a religion, is to say what God never intended to be said, and what shall never come to pass. That religion bears the

stamp of the Deity, and it will and must accomplish its purpose. It had a definite object in view, and that object it has steadily kept in its eye, and is pushing on to accomplish it. When the earth shall be redeemed; when sin shall be no longer a part of our nature, then faith in Christ will be superseded by some nobler condition, some higher change. Faith will be swallowed up in victory, and this planet will become a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

If God wills the victory of the Church, who can destroy it? Can science do it? No. She loves the truth, and vindicates it. Can infidelity do it? No. She has tried and failed, and blushingly owns her impotency. Can civil power do it? No. It has failed in the experiment, and now protects it. Can ecclesiastical power do it? No. She is ashamed of her decrees, and is a penitent at the shrine of injured virtue. Can man individually do it? No. He has tried like Saul of Tarsus; but his hand grew palsied, and his weapon fell powerless at his feet. Can the gates of hell do it? No. For a stronger power opposes them, and says: "So far shall ye go, and no farther."

The brightest stars of the firmament, compared to the Church of Christ in its glory, grow dim. They lose their diamond-like splendor. Their beautiful songs and choruses are cold and spiritless, when contrasted with the theme of redemption. He who is a member of this Church rises in importance. He assumes his true dignity. He claims allegiance and brotherhood with angels. His faith in Christ brightens, expands his vision, enlarges his capacities, beautifies

his nature, gives sublimity to his efforts, and makes him an angel in disguise, a deity in humility. In Christ, the rock, are accumulated vast treasures for man's present and future indulgence. The establishment of this Church, with Christ as its centre, with angels as its ministers, and the Spirit as its sanctifier, is the overflowing of God's benevolence; the concentration of the scattered elements of His benignity. And hence the believer feels no dread. The storm may howl; the earth may quake; the thunder may roar; the lightning may flash; war may desolate; the pestilence may blight; pride may scorn; poverty may chill; friends may forsake; yet amid all, the believer is firm and immovable in Christ, the rock, the foundation of the Church, on which he has built his hope; for he knows that it has God for its author, Christ for its Redeemer, the Spirit for its Sanctifier, and immortality for its end. On faith in Christ, as the rock, the Christian Church is built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

“Lord, thy Church is still thy dwelling,
 Still is precious in thy sight,
 Judah's temple far excelling,
 Beaming with the gospel's light.

“On the rock of ages founded,
 What can shake her sure repose?
 With salvation's wall surrounded,
 She can smile at all her foes.”

DISCOURSE V.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

“If a man die, will he live again?”—Job. xiv. 14.

“Beyond the flight of time,
Beyond the reign of death,
There surely is some clime,
Where life is not a breath,
Nor life's affections transient fire
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.”

THE question which of all others is of most importance to us, is the future state of man. Is he simply a creature of mortality, or does he survive the darkness of the grave? Is death annihilation, or only a passage to another state of existence more favorable to the expansion of the soul? The sentiment of Job, that he should see God, though his body perished, was worthy of his faith; and it has been endorsed by the pious of all ages. It is not particularly necessary to discuss the soul's immortality by metaphysical arguments. The mass of men have not the time to engage in controversy, and the arguments, whether moral or physical, can effect but little in minds who cherish the soul's immortality upon higher authority. The leisure and capacity requisite for such speculative sub-

jects are not generally enjoyed by mankind, and few, comparatively, can appreciate its benefit. Successive application may throw some additional light upon the subject, but every effort will go to prove that matter has no power of its own to think, to plan, to execute, and that philosophy could never simplify this subject so as to make it conducive to the moral and religious elevation of our race. There was a necessity that the soul's immortality should be taught by a special messenger from Heaven, whose authority would be considered conclusive. The teachings of such a person, sustained by unquestionable miracles, would carry with them something of the force of demonstration, and inspire the bosom with a higher order of docility. The author of Christianity has accomplished this, and the frailest, as well as the most gifted intellect, can take pleasure in the contemplation of the soul's immortality. Whatever the skeptic may think, it is certain that the brain is not the sole originator of its thoughts. The existence of an invisible, intelligent agent must be presumed. The most skillful research will fail to identify the location of the soul, yet such a research will concede its existence. The death of the body does not, necessarily, involve the destruction of the soul. They constitute two distinct existences. The difference is, the body may be dissected and analyzed, but the soul is incapable of either. It moves in a higher order of existence, and is of finer organism. The theory that matter cannot be annihilated will apply equally to the soul. The body in its structure was intended for the earth, and the soul for the occupation of heaven.

It is claimed by the infidel, and conceded by the pious, that no one has penetrated the future, and returned with information based on experience ; but the soul's immortality is none the less real for the want of this evidence. There are hidden laws, which operate upon the mind, aside from those which address themselves to our senses. The blind man is sensible of his proximity to a dwelling, by the change he feels in the atmosphere. His nerves, in this case, become as it were eyes to him. He does not see, but he feels the presence of some building by the changed density of the atmosphere. A solitary case may be a delusion ; but when every blind man feels the same influence, and shares the same impression, they, in these cases, are governed by a law as certain as those of sight or hearing. And so when all nations, kindreds, tongues and people feel and declare that the soul's immortality is a conviction which they cannot suppress ; we must concede man's immortality to be a reality, and not a delusion. Conjectures, founded upon reason and analogy, are not to be rejected. Columbus, the great navigator, though he had never seen, nor probably heard of this western hemisphere, yet concluded there must be such a continent. His knowledge of the physical world taught him that beyond the ocean there ought to be another hemisphere to balance the eastern. Reason sustained him, and though he could not demonstrate his theory, because he could not see the land, yet he felt certain of its existence ; and his perseverance attested the sincerity of his belief, while his discoveries confirmed his conjectures.

Upon a similar mode of reasoning Sir William Herschel concluded that other stars existed to make our planetary system perfect, though he could not see them, that nevertheless they existed, and that, too, at certain points in the heavens. And when he afterwards applied his powerful telescope, lo ! the heretofore invisible stars dawned upon his vision. And so astronomers, generally, from circumstances and analogy, believe that the other planets are inhabited, not because they have visited them, but because the present plan and state of things here would render those planets unfinished and imperfect if they were not occupied. Upon a similar mode of reasoning we infer the soul's immortality. We see in man evidences of design, which shadow forth a future existence. We see him possessed of extraordinary powers, beyond what is necessary for the purposes of subsistence. We see him dissatisfied, as he advances in life, and is longing for purer and holier scenes than he has yet seen—his imagination paints a future, where the turmoils of life shall cease ; where disease shall not emaciate the body ; where tyranny shall not oppress ; where friendship shall not grow cold ; where love and confidence shall be perpetual, and benevolence unwearied. These anticipations betray the existence of a nature within, whose destiny is not earth, but heaven ; for we cannot suppose that God would awaken and encourage these desires, if there be no foundation for them, and no disposition on his part to gratify them.

The mind, though unable to penetrate the deep recesses of the future, yet feels that it is not doomed to

annihilation ; that the elements of immortality, with which the soul is impregnated, will survive the dissolution of the sepulchre, and indulge in those occupations which were the chief sources of its felicity on earth. The genius of Milton and Shakspeare, the artistic skill of Rubens and Phidias, the philosophical knowledge of Newton and Bacon, will find a wider scope for the exercise of their capacities ; while the devotional feelings of the prophets, the apostles and martyrs, will glow with a holier enthusiasm. We are grateful to Socrates, to Plato, to Cyrus, and to Cato for the firmness with which they advocated the soul's immortality. Their testimony was but the response of the divinity within. The plea of the skeptic, that the brain originates its own thoughts is based upon arguments more presumptive than conclusive. Matter has none of the properties of thought. The brain is the instrument on which the soul strikes the key-note of thought, and puts in motion the delicate mechanism of the brain, which at times may seem to think, when the soul suspends its operation. But those sleepy thoughts are nothing but the prolonged and fitful vibrations of the original impulse of the soul, which the mental organism, in obedience to its hidden laws, evolves. The telegraphic operator touches the key of his instrument, and the message flashes along the wire, yet he may be asleep when the message arrives. The musician touches the key of his instrument, and long after he has withheld his fingers, the instrument is musical with the glow of its first vibrations. The brain does not and cannot think of itself. It is an in-

strument of thought, subjected to the master spirit of the man, the soul, that makes it speak forth in strains of intellectual melody. The brain is an indispensable appendix to the soul, through whose agency the soul is able to photograph, so to speak, upon its surface in infinitesimal characters the thoughts and images of life, that the microscopic eye of memory may comprehend them at a glance. The connection of the soul with the brain, a material substance, was necessary in order to communicate with the outer world. The soul is the real divinity that stirs within, an essence of the Supreme, guiding the functions of the body, and by discipline and experience is preparing itself for a higher sphere of action. It was the misfortune of Socrates to suffer martyrdom for advancing this beautiful, if not original conception.

The connection of the soul with the body is too intricate to be explained by ordinary modes of reasoning. It has been demonstrated, that a partial destruction of the brain does not seriously impair the mental faculties. The shrinking of the brain in old age or infirmities, though it affects the vigor of the mind, yet is no evidence that the conscious self in man is mortal. We know that the brain, as such, is capable, by exercise, of expansion; that it partakes of the changes peculiar to matter. The destruction of the instrument on which the musician holds in breathless silence his auditors does not necessarily involve the destruction of the musician. Place before him another instrument, and his artistic skill will inspire you with its original power. And so the weakness of the brain by age does

not imply a corresponding weakness of the soul. If the brain, the instrument, is weak, out of order, the thoughts will not be so vigorous and glowing, and the intellectual melody not so sweet; but the fault is not in the soul, the musician, but in the brain, the instrument. The destruction of the one does not necessarily involve the destruction of the other. If men, therefore, are not drawn to the contemplation of the soul's immortality, it is not because that subject is not clearly taught by reason and revelation; it is not because man is averse to the contemplation of the future, nor because he places a less value upon a permanent inheritance; nor because he denies the resurrection of Christ and the future of rewards and punishments; but simply because he is indifferent, because the present objects have more influence with him, and because his pleasure and conveniences are more identified with them. It is only when death approaches man, that he feels his high destiny—his God-like distinction—feels that his soul is immortal, an exile from Heaven, a wandering star from its orbit, a ray of the Deity, a drop of the ocean of eternity. You may reason with him then, if you please, and tell him the soul is mortal, that death is annihilation, and he will laugh you to scorn.

“'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone
Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
The soul can comfort, elevate and fill,
That only, and that amply this performs.”

Science cannot controvert this hope of the Christian. To him the soul's immortality is as clear as the noon-

day sun. His faith seizes the soul-inspiring doctrine and looks heavenward. He asks for no demonstration, for he knows that the subject is beyond the scope of scientific investigation; that human philosophy must here own its weakness, and faith assert its supremacy; that the foundation and the superstructure of the Christian system is a mystery, and that the soul's immortality, a part of that system, must remain at present a mystery. His thoughts glow with enthusiasm, as he reflects on this subject, for he recognizes in this immortality a heavenly distinction. He knows that the chemist cannot analyze the properties of the soul—cannot tell what are the constituent elements of thought, perception and consciousness, and that all his experiments will end in confusion, and the verdict of the world in favor of the soul's immortality, will still rule in the ascendant.

The connection of the soul with the body was a part of Heaven's economy, to endow it with experience, skill and ability, to lay the foundation of its future bliss upon a broader and deeper foundation, that it may hereafter occupy a body of higher organization, and in its new relation to touch some other key-notes of thought upon strings of sweeter melody and loftier inspirations. The present state of man may be one of pupilage, a dawn of a more glorious destiny. It is hardly to be presumed, that those noble, uncultivated intellects which meet us in every turn of life are ever to remain so. The few blazing intellectual stars that have thrown their splendor over an admiring world, are not exceptions, but samples of what shall be here-

after, heralds that proclaim the future nobility of man, when mortality shall put on immortality. The voice of reason and religion teach me, that man was never intended forever to crawl on the earth like a worm—forever to spin and weave like a spider—forever to inure his shoulders to burdens, like the beasts. The signs of the times are more luminous, and the evidences of immortality more transparent. The height to which the human intellect has risen, forms a monument whose lofty summit pierces the dusky shadows of eternity, and intimates a glorious future to man. These intellectual examples are shadows of a glorious substance, signboards stationed midway between heaven and earth, pointing to those Elysian fields of bliss, where the intellect, now cramped, chilled, and debased, shall find its proper and legitimate sphere of action.

There are mental qualities in man which seem unadapted to the present state of his existence. They seem to be in a state of suspense, waiting for the dawn of a new era, in which the soul's existence will find all its powers and faculties brought into active requisition. Under the impassioned glow of that new era, patriotism will produce nobler examples of heroism; eloquence will make prouder conquests; science will make more wonderful discoveries; the sublime and beautiful will excite loftier emotions; the sonorous strains of music will thrill with holier feelings; and the forms of loveliness will far exceed the ideal beauty of the most gifted imagination. The superior endowments of the mind, its wonderful faculties, its aspirations for something

purser and holier than it has yet felt, seem to indicate a loftier nature than is consistent with an earthly destiny.

“The soul of man was made to walk the skies ;
Delightful outlet of her prison here !
There, disencumbered of her chains, the ties
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large ;
There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion, let loose all her powers,
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.”

The intellect of man was intended to be in subordination to his moral nature—to perceive and prosecute those subjects which are allied to his happiness. Intellectuality alone is not the substratum of man’s felicity. The longings of his moral nature require its use as an agent to discover truths and multiply motives of obedience. The intellect is to him, what the microscope is to the naturalist, or what the telescope is to the astronomer. His intellect is the medium, through which he derives his knowledge of God, the power of his authority, the loveliness of his benevolence, the profundity of his wisdom, and the grandeur of his justice. Without this knowledge of God there could be no obedience to his laws, no reverence for his character, and no gratitude for his benefactions. The capacities of the mind to explore the magazine of science, to calculate eclipses, to number the stars, to predict physical phenomena, to bridge forbidden rivers, to tunnel lofty mountains, to clothe thoughts with electricity, to analyze chemical combinations, to take microscopic views of organic life, and astronomical observations of the

heavens, are great ; but these lofty subjects are not to be the only and superior employments of the mind. They fall short of the real objects of life. The religious nature of man rises to a higher magnitude, and opens a wider and more glorious field for the application of our powers. The study of God is more elevating and ennobling. Angelic intelligences, with their vast powers, have made but little progress in their knowledge of God. Eternity, itself, will be insufficient with the most arduous application to comprehend him. He swells upon our imagination in unapproachable grandeur, till we stand fixed, like statues, in silent amazement, at the vastness of his power. No telescope can reach his throne, nor perceive those intelligent and conscious satellites that revolve around him. It is in the contemplation of such a being, even through the darkened medium that surrounds him, that we begin to feel emotions of the moral sublime, and rise upward to the true dignity of men, in thought, in feeling, and in action. We look with a sort of religious horror on the man, who, either from affected wisdom, or depravity, fails to contemplate him as the supreme source of all that is great and good. The most gifted, unaccustomed to associate God with their every-day thoughts, have been forced, like Sir Humphrey Davy, to inscribe upon their journal, " We are miserable." To the skeptic, the future opens no pleasing prospect. The moral splendor of God is shrouded from his vision, and his existence is a vacuo, an emptiness, a blank. The interior of his mind is like a cave filled with dismal sounds and frightful images, and never can life be to him what

God intends it to be, till he feels the immortality of the soul, controlling and sanctifying his emotions.

It was Socrates and Plato, who before the dawn of Christianity, desired a revelation from heaven. They felt the divinity within, but they could not demonstrate it. Were they living in the days of the Apostles, they would have embraced the faith of the despised Nazarene, and said: "We have found it; we have found it." The Mosaic dispensation was too exclusive to find a response in the human bosom; and Paganism was too dark and perplexing to comfort the bewildered mind. Human philosophy was prompt to discover the evils of sin; but could suggest no remedy. Darkness brooded over the world for centuries, until Christ brought life and immortality to light. The mists and vapors of a long cherished superstition fell from the vision of the pagan devotee, and Christianity stands forth, confessed the climax of God's revelation to man. Any further light of the future would be injurious. It would supersede, to some extent, the exercise of faith, and so circumscribe the quantity, as well as the quality, of our Christian graces. Our race would be, not one of faith, but one of sight, and our religious exercises would be rather automatic than natural.

The weight of the atmosphere, we sustain, if concentrated on a given point of the body, would crush us to death. Its equal distribution neutralizes the weight, and we bear it with impunity. And so if the soul could feel the concentrated glory of immortality, its emotions would be so intense as to rupture the nervous system, and superinduce death. The human body has

often fallen a victim to the ecstatic pleasure of the soul. God, in his wisdom, has tempered this excess, by veiling the felicities of heaven. Yet we see enough to strengthen our hopes, encourage us in our labors, and inflame our gratitude. For clearer exhibitions of the soul's destiny, we must wait till the union is dissolved, and the soul shall occupy another more glorious body, whose superior organization can bear a higher pressure with impunity. The rapture, which the pious sometimes feel in their religious meditations, is not without injury. The pleasing smiles, that sometimes mantle the face of the dying Christian, are, no doubt, produced by those ravishing visions which the eye of faith grasped. They were the earnest of what is to be, the dawn, the twilight of a glorious immortality.

Existence, to many of us, though pleasant, is not as happy as it is intended to be. The earthly paradise is to be succeeded by a heavenly one, in which there shall be purer skies, richer flowers, more gorgeous rainbows, holier aspirations, and more enduring loveliness. There devotion never grows cold, friendships never change, pestilence never sweeps, death never smites, war never desolates, passions never consume, malice never corrodes, falsehood never pollutes ; but peace, and joy, and love shall bloom eternal. The increasing vigor of the soul's faculties, under these influences, will wing it with a loftier progression. If man's destiny was less than this, then God, who raised man's expectation, who inspired his hopes, who fledged his wings here, has disappointed him. But it would be sacrilege in us to charge God with such conduct. Everywhere has he

taught us, "The soul immortal as its sire shall never die."

It is no part of God's plan, that man, after death, shall live again on earth. Nature teaches a resurrection, a state of progression. A retrograde movement is subversive of nature's order. It defeats the designs of God, and the happiness of man. Onward is the voice of God, as oracled in nature. The seed, deposited in the earth, will not always remain a seed. The egg, incubated, will not always remain an egg. The caterpillar, crawling on the earth, will not always remain a caterpillar. The seed will, perchance, become a beautiful flower; the egg a bird of song, with golden plumage, and the caterpillar a gorgeous butterfly, a flower of the air. Nature, in its appearance, is constantly changing, undergoing dissolution, and a resurrection; and thus she becomes God's oracle to teach man a resurrection, that earth is not man's final abode, that his life was not given to sink into nothingness, and that those religious aspirations he feels, thronging the altar of his heart, are not to remain ungratified. We infer, from the teachings of nature, that from man's decayed body there shall arise another, not identically the same, not a corporeal body; but a spiritual one, a glorified one, adapted to its new existence, furnished with wings, with unfading splendor, and with dainty taste; with senses so refined and powerful that they can see objects and hear sounds millions of miles afar.

Besides, the experience of man is such that he is averse to the renewal of his existence on earth. His knowledge of improvement recoils at the idea of again

being an infant, and passing through the ordeal of his juvenile trials and perplexities. He anticipates a higher condition. Progress is his nature, and he expects to be associated with a higher order of intelligences, and that, too, with increased facilities for enjoyment. The past, to him, if he be pious, is like a desert; the present is the vista through which the eye of his faith pierces, and beholds scenes of unearthly beauty. His impatience increases as he nears the border of the spirit-land, and hears the sweet melody of angels' harps. The man, homeward bound, who has passed through wild deserts, infested with ferocious beasts, with poisonous reptiles and robbers, from which he has miraculously escaped, has no disposition to repeat his journey, especially, if he has approached so near his home as to see the smoke curling from his chimney-top, to hear the baying of his favorite dog, or to recognize the merry laugh of his playful children. To go back, to begin again that tedious and perilous journey, without seeing those loved ones for whom his soul longeth, would be agony supreme. So, when the body sickens and is about to die, the soul, hearing in the distance the sweet melody of angels' harps, and catching glimpses of those loved ones gone before, feels a transport which its approaching end heightens. To disappoint its expectation, to turn its face earthward, after exciting its heavenly vision, forms no part of the economy of God. The soul has finished its mission on earth, has answered its purpose, and it joyously flutters away from the body, its dead companion, and rises majestically to the fields of Elysian bliss.

“ Shall I be left abandoned in the dust
When fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
Shall nature’s voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live?
Is it for this vain virtue oft must strive,
With disappointment, penury and pain?
No, Heaven’s immortal spring shall yet arrive,
And man’s majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the eternal year of love’s triumphant reign.”

The future happiness of the soul is based upon the promises of God to man, upon the constitution of man, himself, which makes him dissatisfied with the present, and inspires him with the love of a higher existence. It is based, too, upon the necessity of the pious, who have consecrated their all to God in anticipation of it; who have abandoned the pleasures and amusements of life; who have struggled under every adverse circumstance to maintain their Christian integrity; and who have incurred the ridicule and persecution of others; and if there be no future state of felicity, then, of all men, are they the most miserable and deluded; but that cannot be a delusion which is founded upon reason and revelation. Their anticipations are the reflex of the integrity of God. If there be any delusion, it is with those who deny the soul’s immortality, and under whose teachings man’s destiny is a mystery. It is affecting to contemplate the conduct of some of the most gifted men of the present age, men of science and general literature. Dr. Mason Good, of England, for many years was an infidel. If learning, if morality, if literary popularity could confer happiness on him, then he ought to have been extremely happy. But such

was not the case. His mind was the seat of confusion, a moral chaos; and he never felt the heaven-born thrillings of a true man, till he renounced his cobweb theory, and saw himself in the reflected light of heaven, a child, not of chance, but of immortality. Noble thoughts inspire noble emotions, and consecrate the affections. A sense of responsibility creates anxiety to meet the ordeal of a just judgment. And, hence, man rises in the scale of morality, as his sense of responsibility increases. In proportion, therefore, as we feel the force of the soul's immortality, will our happiness advance. The fear of death will be extinguished, and the more arduous and persevering will be our efforts to rise in the estimation of God. When great interests are at stake; when Heaven is to be won or lost by our own conduct, we cannot be indifferent spectators. We will brace ourselves for the conflict, and sink or swim, we will make every effort to work out our redemption with fear and with trembling.

There is no intermediate state between death and the Judgment. "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise," is reversely true of the wicked, who shall on the day of their death be in punishment. The moral status of the soul here will decide its future condition. He that is holy shall be holy still, and he that is filthy shall be filthy still. There will be, literally, no quenchless fires, and no ceaseless gnawing worm, but a moral agony, consuming and intense; reproaches unmitigated; a pungent sense of shame, and perpetual self-condemnation. Unavenged injuries here will be avenged there, and all the baser passions of the soul

will be intensified, and war, and strife, and moral carnage will rule in the ascendant. The pious shall live in peace. The fruits of the Spirit that began to blossom here, will ripen there, and holiness will be the perpetual heritage of the redeemed.

The true object of life is not simply to toil for food and raiment ; nor yet to gratify the promptings of ambition ; nor yet to indulge in ease and luxury ; nor bask in the sunshine of pleasure ; nor riot in excesses ; but the true object of life is to prepare for death. Passions are to be subdued, avarice is to be suppressed, the Sabbath is to be kept holy, the heart is to be softened under the influences of prayer and humility, and the offices of benevolence are to be judiciously exercised. The purer and holier man is, the easier is his passage through the valley and shadow of death, and the more resplendent will be the crown of his glory.

“ When we gain the heavenly regions,
When we touch the heavenly shore—
Blessed thought !—no hostile legions
Can alarm or trouble more ;
Far beyond the reach of foes,
We shall dwell in sweet repose.”

“ O, that hope ! how bright, how glorious,
’Tis his people’s blest reward ;
In the Saviour’s strength, victorious,
They at length behold their Lord.
In his kingdom they shall rest,
In his love be fully blest.”

DISCOURSE VI.

LIFE'S BREVITY, AND ITS SORROWS.

PREACHED WITH SOME ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS ON
THE DEATH OF HON. GEO. W. DUNCAN, OF
BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA.

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.”—
JOB xiv. 1.

“And death is terrible—the tear,
The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier,
And all we know, or dream, or fear,
Of agony are his.”—*Halleck.*

“O God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing!”—*Byron.*

DEATH is the lot of man. To-day he blushes in health, sports in festive halls, reposes in luxurious ease, or else indulges in the noble duties of Christianity, and to-morrow he dies. The grave hails him as its guest; the worms embrace him as their brother, and corruption weds him as its spouse. The impartiality of death leaves no ground for jealousies, and his inexorable demands admit of no excuses. His prodigious scythe sweeps over the world, and the young and old of both sexes and all nationalities fall helplessly before him. The sorrow that follows in his train is in pro-

portion to our civil and moral elevation. In our homes the grief is intensified, because it operates in a narrower circle. There is less pageantry in the expression of our sorrows, but more depth and sincerity. We pause in silent amazement as we gaze on the dead of our homes, and ask: "Can this be death?" We gaze with tearful eyes on the dumb lip, the pallid cheek, the cold and stiffened form, and feel an unearthly solemnity. We tremble at the narrowness of our escape, and our proximity to death alarms us. We feel deeply the vanity of life, and weep over hopes forever crushed in the dust. O, it would be more than felicity, if we could recall the fleeting breath, and give speech to those poor dumb lips, lustre to those leaden eyes, and warmth and beauty to that cold and stiffened form! But alas! the fiat of Heaven has gone forth, and his fate is sealed. We may ease our sorrows in tears, but there can be no reunion on earth.

"Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flattery soothe the dull, cold ear of death?"

A funeral occasion is not without its lesson. There are few so constituted as to gaze upon the dead without feeling emotions of grief. They see in that death hopes blighted, and their sorrow is in proportion to the strength of their friendship. Those, whose bosoms glow with feelings of kindness and tenderness, whose office of affection has been reciprocal, cannot bear the separation without agony. The fountain of their peace

will seem ruptured, their minds will wear a gloomy aspect, existence will seem a void, and the whole machinery of domestic and social life will seem shattered, and the mind, for the time being, will be agitated by a confusion of purpose. The solemn and painful thought, too, may obtrude itself upon the mind, that the separation may be final. Under the light of reason the distressed mind can find no motive to soothe its anguish. The darkness of the grave, the uncertainty of the future keep the mind in a state of painful suspense, a sort of vacuo, a moral chaos, in which there is not a ray of light to enliven the darkness within. Our grief finds no antidote in the teachings of philosophy. It is in the hour of bereavement that the religion of Christ shows its supremacy. It brings a soothing balm to ease the disquietude of the mind. It comes to us in the hour of distress like an angel of mercy, and wipes the tears from the brow of suffering humanity, strengthens, when human agency is powerless, and inspires with courage, when human fortitude cowers and sinks prostrate in the dust. To mourn immoderately over the dead who die in the Lord is considered an improper expenditure of grief. The transition from life temporal to life eternal is one of infinite gain, and only selfish feelings would wish us to recall them to pass again through the ordeal of a protracted suffering. There is a peculiar tenderness in God. He never afflicts merely to agonize us; but to superinduce a state of holier feeling. He, alone of all others, knows the force of the temptations that surround us, and he appreciates every holy aspiration after a more elevated

piety. The failure to accomplish a holy purpose, either through weakness or fear, is not exactly punished by him ; nor can the true penitent find a period too late to implore the exercise of his forgiving mercy. The benevolence of God is commensurate to his ability.

An impenetrable darkness shrouds the operations of death, and the profoundest silence pervades his empire. From other kingdoms intelligence may be had, either by letter or telegraphic dispatches, but here the voyagers can make no communications to their friends as to their destiny. We see the remains of their bodies, but we know not where the soul has winged its flight, into what regions it has gone, and with whom it associates. A silence painfully perplexing clothes their history. No tramp of busy footsteps is heard in this city of death ; no merry laugh apprizes you of a jocund throng ; no rosy, blushing face cheers you with its beaming smiles ; no voice of man, nor beast, nor warbling bird, breaks upon the dismal silence. All is stillness, deep, mysterious, profound, as if the whole pulse of Nature had ceased to beat. As no one there feels the power of life and consciousness, so, consequently, no one returns from that country of bones and skulls to communicate intelligence. This awful silence gives to death a mysterious power, that makes us involuntarily shudder, as we approach the border of his kingdom.

The display of his ordinary power alarms us, and we shrink back, cold and lifeless, at his icy touch ; but there are times when that invisible and uncompromising power of his is put forth in all its terrible-ness, and then, like the unbridled tempest, he sweeps

the earth like an angel of wrath. The nations of the earth tremble and shake like aspen leaves, and look aghast, as if petrified with amazement. Napoleon, though accustomed to scenes of desolation, yet in the burning of Moscow stood trembling and appalled at the demon of havoc, that blended in one promiscuous carnage the victor and the vanquished. And more recently, the people of Chicago and Boston, in their burning cities, ran frantic from street to street, like demoniacs, at the wrathful flames that consigned them and their loved ones to a fiery grave. War, too, often clothing itself with the terrors of conflagration, riots in human existence. The battle-field is covered with the dying and the dead, and the passions of the combatants, intensified by national hatred and jealousies, exercise to the fallen the most shameless cruelty. Ordinarily, in the time of peace, the old and the infirm die first; but in war, where death holds his carnival, the youth of promise and the man of science and vigorous existence, fall victims at its altar. The props and support of society are sacrificed, and a nation, exhausted in materials and broken in spirit, from weakness, totters in its existence, or perishes with nothing but its former memories to console its misfortune. More noiselessly, though not less fatal, death wings himself with the pestilence, that walketh at noon, and desolates the earth. The wailings of widows and orphans are heard in our streets, and the numerous funeral processions attest the wide-spread desolation of death. The fruits of industry are dissipated like the chaff; the works of science and the monuments of genius lie

neglected in the dust, and the functions of social and civil life are suspended. Earth seems one vast cemetery, and the living, like the condemned criminal, dare not hope, but tremblingly await their turn to be immolated on the altar of inexorable death.

To conquer a foe, we must be brought in full contact with him; but unfortunately for us, death has no visible existence, no tangible form, and, consequently, the ancient artists regarded him as a nonentity, and represented him in the form of a sleeping statue. It was never the custom of the ancients to offer sacrifices to death, because he could not be pacified. The superstitious pagans dreaded him, and their imaginations were often harrowed with forebodings of evil. The mode of death's existence was too mysterious to be comprehended, and his influence too subtle to be checked, and his power too insidious and crushing to be resisted. Hence, as a foe to man, he has nothing to dread from defeat, for no man can feel his power and live. His insensibility precludes the possibility of a successful encounter. He is imbedded in our natures, and is silently sapping the foundation of our existence, so that without the accessories of accidents, he will in the end triumph over us. The cause, sin, that gave him this power, may be modified, but physical death, now, has become an inseparable part of our destiny. The invasion of death's empire by Christ has robbed him of his sting, and the grave of its victory; but he will ever remain a terror to the wicked, an adjunct to religion to awe men into obedience.

Painful as the necessity of death is, yet he destroys

nothing that is positively good. It is his mission to humble the proud and haughty, to purify society, to keep the elements of morality in a healthy and vigorous condition, to lop off the superfluities of animal existence, and to elevate the spiritual over the temporal nature of man. Hence, he spares neither age nor sex, but rushes on with impartial strides, and lays prostrate in the dust, kings and nobles, in common with their subjects. Upon the tombs of these trophies nature may weep, but reason and religion will recognize a spiritual triumph, and applaud death for his concealed benevolence. They recognize in him the only true purifier of society, as the one, alone, who can crush out the conceit and vanity of man, and blast the purposes of evil. He is the electricity that purifies the moral atmosphere, and ventilates the flowers and fruits of a higher morality. He is the flood-gate that drains off the superfluities of animal existence, and makes the remaining portion purer and holier. Death, too, is the confederate of religion. He stops the vagrant thoughts, fixes the attention of men, leads to religious reflection, aids justice and morality, levels all distinction, teaches the vanity of life, connects the imagination with eternity, gives hope to the weary and despondent, and opens a passage to the felicities of heaven. To the pious, he has lost his appalling terror, for he is a friend in disguise; to the wicked he is the precursor of wrath.

Formidable as death is, he is more frequent now in his visits than formerly. Civilization has lent him power, and multiplied agencies to abet his hostility to our race, and he strides the world like a Colossus.

There is no spot on earth where he has not made conquests. The puny power of man wilts before him, and his ensigns float defiantly in every breeze. Other enemies, generally, approach us visibly. Their proximity is often heralded by music, or by the clashing of arms; but death is silent in his approaches, and often deals the tidings in the blow. The progress of civilization, too, has multiplied the chances of sudden deaths. Populous cities, the fruits of civilization, become the centres of crime, and the elements of death keep pace with their growth and expansion. The passion for wealth builds up cities, and betrays itself by pandering to the capricious taste of the fickle multitude. Gorgeous and richly decorated saloons; fashionable entertainments; lascivious music; commercial competition; glittering vices, veiled under the garb of respectability; the amalgamation of different nationalities, with a blending of their peculiar vices; the rapidity with which epidemic diseases circulate, and the infection of the air, caused by the breathings of diseased lungs, present a most inviting field for the operations of death. Here he finds confederates ready to do his bidding. As commerce, too, advances, and spreads its broad white wings to the breeze, collisions at sea and shipwrecks are more frequent. Steam, the great revolutionizer of modern times, stands ready with its broad, burning, hissing lip, to consume us, so that, when we step on board of a steamship or car, there is no certainty that we shall reach our destination. In the midnight, in a profound sleep, the terrible cry that the ship is on fire, or is sinking, may thrill us with horror. To these may

be added others less threatening in their external aspect, though not less fatal in their consequences. Sea-bathing, pleasure excursions, and racing are often attended with sudden deaths. These unexpected deaths carry sorrow to the homes of loved ones ; and often excite such violent emotions of grief as to superinduce death, or lead to that most painful of all calamities, Insanity. How true it is, that in the midst of life we are in death, and that man born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.

“ Teach me the measure of my days,
Thou Maker of my frame ;
I would survey life's narrow space,
And learn how frail I am.

“ A span is all that we can boast —
An inch or two of time !
Man is but vanity and dust
In all his flower and prime.”

It is not in the nature of man to be permanently happy here. The imperfection of his judgment, and the clashing interests of others often involve him in serious difficulties. His nature is such that he is impatient of the present, and he rushes into engagements with little or no reflection. His efforts meet with no encouragement from public sympathy, and he sees his most arduous labors crushed in the dust. The friendly aid upon which he relies is often withheld, and in his eager pursuit of ambitious schemes, he incurs the hatred and animosity of others. Often, too, his departure from the rules of integrity, Nemesis-like, tor-

tures him. The future, to which he looks with hopes of better success, disappoints his expectations. If by chance he plumes his wings for intellectual distinction, he finds rivals equal, if not superior to himself. Self-love magnifies his pretensions, and preferences given to others inspire him with hatred. Or if he stands unrivalled in the field of science, yet like Newton, he feels that he has gathered up only a few pebbles, while the ocean of undiscovered truths lies in illimitable grandeur before him. His noblest conceptions often displease him, or they fail to secure their merited applause. The world to him is like the storm-beaten sea, whose furious waves beat mercilessly against him, and wreck the felicities of his hopes. Disappointment and anxiety embarrass him, and destroy the serenity of his sleep. Domestic and social evils throng his footsteps, and annoy him with their painful dissensions. The inhalation of poisonous elements is silently sapping the foundation of his existence, or is preparing him to transmit a diseased constitution to his posterity. Plans sagaciously and hopefully formed, are blighted before their maturity. Often, the most tender relations are broken, and his children, by their misconduct, bring down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. Death, finally, comes and crowns the climax of these misfortunes.

Aside from private sufferings, public ones beset us in our pilgrimage. Man is man's deadliest foe, when his anger is roused, and his wrath often comes as crushingly as it does suddenly. To hold our peace, our fortunes, and our lives, and those of our families

at the will of another, who is neither wise nor humane, but a fanatic, is anything but happiness. The love of power, whether secular or religious, has not scrupled to practice the grossest injustice. The rights of individuals have been trampled in the dust, and an ambitious priesthood has fettered the freedom of conscience by threats of confiscation and death. The better to succeed, they have sought to terrify the ignorant and superstitious with fictitious miracles. A contribution, too, has been laid upon death by representing him as a Gothic skeleton, whose fleshless frame awakened the most gloomy sensations. That the remembrance may not be easily effaced from their minds, these skeleton images were either carved or painted upon their bridges, their public buildings, their household utensils, their garments, their books and their finger-rings. The grave, which the ancients regarded as the abode of peace, was converted by them into a charnel-house. Purgatorial punishments were threatened to all who should repudiate the creed of the Mother Church. The Inquisition, with its terrific insignia, was paraded through the streets. It was an age of religious terror and despotism; and the victims that fell to satiate this Moloch were numerous. Some hid in caves and dens, and others in the wilderness; but this fanatical Nemesis ferreted them out and gorged herself with their blood. Those were troublesome times, and the haunted and persecuted knew not the hour of their death.

But the world, too, is afflicted with civil and political strife. We are often plunged in the vortex of war without even our consent. The multitude, exas-

perated with either a real or fancied injury, will sometimes rush on to try the fortunes of war, and involve a whole nation in bloodshed. Some of the most terrible wars of Europe have had their origin under the most trifling provocation. The terrible war through which we recently passed is too painfully disastrous not to excite our sympathies, and force us to deplore its consequences. Society, with scarcely a speck to mar its beauty, passed through a convulsive upheaval, and the dross crystallized itself upon its surface. The State groans under an exacting and oppressive taxation, and a rude unlettered rabble deliberate upon our destiny. The Executive, through mistaken clemency, pardons the assassin and the robber, to roam at large like demons, to blight and desolate. The Sacred Temple of Justice is desecrated, and from the Shekinah of its sanctum sanctorum comes the wailings of injured virtue. The cup of gall put to our lips might have been less bitter, the franchise, less universal, the taxation, less oppressive, and the bayonets, less bristling; but as the evils have come upon us overwhelmingly and crushingly we will bear them with Christian fortitude, and add our testimony to the millions gone before, that "man born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble."

Not all the evils of life, however, are to be considered unavoidable. Many of these evils are the consequences of our choice and imprudence. They owe their origin to the excesses of evil passions; to an unbridled licentiousness; to the infraction of civil and moral laws; to the habits of intemperance; to the in-

dulgence of idleness ; to the projects of ambition ; to the insatiable thirst of wealth ; to pride ; to hatred and jealousies. Natural and providential evils are to be distinguished from moral ones. Sickness and death are unavoidable from the constitution of our natures. They form a part of our existence, and though the pains inflicted are sometimes poignant, yet they are limited in their duration. The world requires a successive population. The decayed energies of the old must be succeeded by the renewed energies of the young. The human race is perpetually renewing itself to develop the resources of nature, and keep the social and civil elements in healthy circulation. The dead of the present generation will be resurrected in the next, not in identity, but in humanity. The earth could not support an undying population with its present mode of existence. Hence, disease and death are necessities. Any interference on the part of God with the actions of men would destroy their free agency, would neutralize the motives to a virtuous life, and lead to the indulgence of crime ; for virtue would lose its reward, and guilt its merited punishment. The active interposition of the Deity would be required to checkmate the designs of the vicious. The moral government of God would not be one of choice, but, one of necessity ; and perpetual miracles would be required to guide its destiny to a felicitous conclusion. Man's responsibility would cease. He would be an automaton, moved only as God moves him. Such a state of things would conflict with the wisdom of God, and the felicity of man. The man of virtuous habits, who

shapes his conduct according to the established laws of God ; who seeks not to be greater than nature has made him ; who lives, not so much for himself as for others ; who has right conceptions of the character of God, and will do that only which is right and proper, cannot fail to be a happy man. The evils of life, such as they are, will pale in comparison with the felicities of heaven. Death, though seemingly an enemy, will crown him with a glorious immortality.

“Death is the crown of life :

Were death denied, poor man would live in vain.
Death wounds to cure ; we fall, we rise, we reign ;
Spring from our fetters, fasten to the skies
Where blooming Eden withers from our sight—
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.”

Remedies have been sought for most of the evils of life, but in vain. Philosophy has not softened them, nor civilization lessened them. The adventurous speculator has multiplied the chances of misery and death, by incessantly goading the mind with new schemes of interest. There are exceptions, for the world is beautiful and lovely, and designed for happiness. Many roll in ease, and some make a rational use of their wealth, and rise above the mass in quietude of mind. As you descend from these, the scale of human felicity grows less, till you get down to the very whirlpool, the sink of crime, where misery sits enthroned with her revolting features. The world is maddened with sin, and if disease and death did not moderate this moral frenzy, the earth would become a Golgotha. But death

interposes his power, blights the incorrigible and modifies the miseries of mankind. The ungodliness of man in its maturity is not transmitted to the young. Crime has its beginning, its maturity, and its end. There is no unbroken, progressive succession in crime, no moral hereditary affection. The mantle of iniquity does not fall upon the young in its full proportions. The youth must learn, must take his first lesson in the school of iniquity ; his chances of success and defeat : he must taste the bitterness of the accusings of a tender conscience, before he arrives to the condition of manhood in crime. Meantime, death is busy, checking the inroad of vice by lopping off the more pernicious branches of the tree of humanity, and thus adding vigor to the more healthy portions of society. I have no fears while death is abroad in seeing the world over-corrupt. The growth of that very corruption carries with it the seeds of death, the elements of its own destruction. The evil works its own ruin by a process as certain as the laws of gravitation.

Whether we are sensible of it or not, we stand on the brink of the grave. The utmost extension of human life is but a span, and the most long-lived find their lives a dream. The work to be accomplished in that short time is great and important. We are sometimes surprised at the supineness of men. Some are immersed in luxury and ease, and others are enthusiastically engaged in the accumulation of wealth. Some are tasking to the utmost their energies to climb the rugged steep of fame, while yet a greater number are bowing before the shrine of pleasure. The thought of

death seldom, if ever, enters their minds. The remonstrances of conscience may sometimes occasion a momentary pain, but these are easily soothed by promises of reformation. The convenient time to prepare for death has not yet come; failures of amendment are apologized for; new promises are made, which are destined to be as readily broken. Time rolls on; the habit of sin becomes stronger, resolution becomes weaker, the reproaches of conscience become less distressing; and man, morally broken, delusively indulges the hope, that he can conquer those passions in his weakness, which he has failed to accomplish in his strength. We cannot too frequently present to such persons the subject of death, nor too ardently insist upon their immediate preparation for eternity.

The repetition of death does not seem to awaken any new images. Familiarity with such scenes lessens the emotions of dread, and the blandishments of hope lure us into the belief that as we have escaped once, we may escape again; that what has happened to others may not, at least, immediately happen to us. The uncertainty, too, of the time of our death has increased our indifference, when it ought rather to be a subject of anxiety, as its uncertainty exposes us to imminent perils. The benevolence of God influenced him to conceal from us the hour of our death; not that we should protract our preparation for it, but that this very uncertainty should be a motive to prepare at once, as we know not the hour when the Son of Man cometh. A knowledge of the time of our death, too, would produce anxiety of mind without averting the catastrophe.

The duties of life would be imperfectly performed, and the whole existence of man would be a protracted death-bed scene. Life would be a sort of chaos, a dismal pilgrimage, whose way-side would be thronged with spectres and frightful images. Besides, if under the circumstances, we repent at all, that repentance may be the result of fear, and not of love. It may be darkened with the suspicion that it is not genuine. Service rendered to God under the full exercise of a reasonable faith will be more acceptable; the love will be purer and the motive higher. For this reason, no doubt, God has concealed from us, in part, the hour of our death. There is no certainty either, if we knew the hour of our death that we would repent. The distance may be remote; a thousand casualties may occur to render it exceedingly difficult. We may defer it, till the last moment; till the body is so racked with pain, and the mind so disordered as to render repentance impossible. It is a dangerous experiment to rob God of our service under the expectation that a few moments of penitence on a dying bed will atone for a life of sin. It is both wisdom and benevolence on the part of God to conceal from us the time and circumstances of our death. Our ignorance of it may lead us sooner to repentance, and crown our existence with nobler virtues. Our knowledge of it may lead us to postpone it forever and find a dishonorable grave. The more we contemplate the economy of God's government the more motives we see to admire his benignity and wisdom.

Very few of us, if any, really intend to die mise-

rably, or without preparation ; but it is painful to think how often we deceive ourselves. We imagine that death is afar off, and without any rational grounds for such a conclusion, we presume to act upon the supposition, when death may be very near to us. There is no security to the robust and temperate, for they both die. We are loth to concede that we are mortal, nor do we impress ourselves with the reality that the shroud and coffin shall be ours. The weeping of Xerxes, near Thermopylæ, at the thought that not one of the five millions of men composing his army would survive a hundred years, is worthy of our imitation. Such a thought may interpose a barrier to the seductive glare of pleasure, and lessen the fascinating splendor of wealth. A long life is but the heritage of a few, and yet so strong is the love of life, so reluctant are we to think of a speedy death, that we flatter ourselves, that we are the few who shall live to an advanced age. Hope encourages this delusion, and we defer preparation for a future time ; and yet in that future time we shall have more errors to atone for, stronger habits of sin to overcome, less resolution and strength to struggle for the mastery of our passions, and less of heaven's favor to crown our repentance with success. The mere intention to prepare for death can afford no permanent pleasure. A conscientious mind cannot be happy in making promises which it is every day breaking. It must feel incessant agitation at the prospect of approaching punishment. The mere hope of repenting in the future, even if successful, can afford no quietude to a mind conscious of trifling with God, and putting

in jeopardy its highest interest. The anticipation of reformation, no matter how agreeable, can never atone for the violation of sacred promises and the dereliction of acknowledged duties. And he, who thus trifles with his duties to God, and violates the sanctity of his conscience, will find the difficulties of a future repentance far more difficult than he now anticipates; for every day lessens his ability to repent, and he may finally die in a state of impenitence, notwithstanding the sincerity of his good intentions.

No one is in a fit condition to die well, who allows his mind to be harassed by divisions of religious sentiments. Stability in religious faith is necessary to composure. A settled persuasion in the truths of Christianity will fortify the mind, protect it against the incursions of a false theology, appropriate to itself the promises of God, and raise it to a vigorous manhood in piety. The motions and operations of the soul are seriously embarrassed by suspense and uncertainty. The adoption of one creed to-day, and the abandonment of it to-morrow for another, will not allow the seeds of truth to germinate and bear fruit; nor will the mind be sufficiently calm and unruffled to attend to the practical duties of Christianity. A prolonged unstableness may lead to practical infidelity, and the dying moments of the sinner may be without the illumination of heaven to cheer his departure.

The work of our redemption is so vast that we have not the time to lose in idle dalliance with pleasure. The art of dying well cannot be secured without a long experience in living well. The uncertainty of

our possessions, the fleeting nature of all earthly advantages, and the precarious tenure by which the most splendid acquisitions are held, suggest an immediate preparation for death. God, too, demands of us more now than formerly, not only in point of piety but in usefulness. The advancement of science has multiplied our advantages tenfold, while the progress of religious truths has been unparalleled in the history of the church. The Sabbath generally has never been better observed; religious literature has never been more generally diffused, and the ministry has never been more pious, talented, and scholastic; and public opinion has never been more favorable to the claims of Christianity. The necessity for immediate preparation is urgent. There is no intermission to the current of life. Our momentum may be accelerated or retarded, but we are, nevertheless, floating down the unseen current of time to the broad interminable ocean of eternity. There will be no reversion to our destiny; no repentance in the grave to which we are hastening. What great interests are at stake! What felicities may be secured by a timely preparation! What overwhelming anguish may be avoided by immediate repentance! Time is short; ask death-beds, and they will tell you. Prepare to meet thy God!

“Turn, sinner, turn; thy danger know;
Where'er thy foot can tread,
The earth rings hollow from below,
And warns thee of her dead.”

LECTURE I.

THE REASONS WHY THE HEBREWS REMAIN A DISTINCT PEOPLE.

I SHALL attempt in this lecture to show some of the reasons why the Hebrews do not accept the Messiah, although the prophecies are out of date. The subject is one that has long engaged my attention, and I hope the expression of my views may not be uninteresting to you, even though you may not be disposed to endorse all I say upon the subject.

The present condition of the Hebrews is a fulfilment of prophecy: "They shall be scattered among all nations, and their homes shall be desolate." This was necessary as a part of the divine plan to keep alive the interest of Christianity, and to prove the Messiahship of Christ. There are very few of us, who accurately know anything of the present history of the Hebrews; and indeed, they know very little of their own history; for there was an interval of a thousand years after their dispersion, before any one of their own countrymen undertook to furnish such a history; and even then, this history was but sparingly circulated, owing to the unsettled state of their condition. As an evidence of the ignorance of their history, Florus, the polytheistic

writer, says: "They are an impious people;" yet we know to the contrary. They are, generally, a religious and conscientious people; whose morality everywhere has given prominence to their nationality. Justin, Strabo, and Appian make use of similar expressions; and the eloquent Roman historian, Tacitus, thought they worshiped Bacchus. In the time of Demetrian, they were blended with the Christians as one with them, and suffered in common with them, during the terrors of his persecution. And the Emperor, Numa, thought the religion of the Hebrews an impious thing; but allowed them free toleration. These facts show how supremely ignorant the most gifted writers of former times were of the character of a people, who could trace their religion back for ages to a Supreme God—a religion, which was given amid the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, and sustained by the most splendid miracles.

That which strikes us as the most remarkable thing in their history is their singular preservation and distinction. We trace their history, and we see them persecuted, driven from place to place; their property confiscated; their social and civil condition degraded by special laws. Like Noah's dove, they seem to have no soil on which to rest their weary feet; to be, as it were, exiles in their own country, cast down, but not forsaken, persecuted, and still the chosen of God. Other nations, when subdued, generally, embrace the religion of their conquerors; not so, however, with the Hebrews. They are repellent, like two electric clouds. They are like quicksilver, that will not amalgamate

with foreign substances. And the Hebrews of to-day are the same as in the days of Moses and Elijah, David and Solomon. The love of their religion is as intense now as formerly ; their zeal has not abated ; nor do they feel any lassitude in their religious devotion. Nothing with them is obsolete in their religion, no matter how ancient.

And this is the point we are to consider as underlying the whole of their religious structure, as an explanation of their singularity, their oneness. In their present condition, they do not act with that force, as when they were embodied in a nation under a ruler ; yet on account of the uniformity of their faith, they act efficiently, and their devotions retain all their ancient vitality. Their rites and ceremonies are still present to their imagination ; their laws are engraven upon their hearts as with a pen of diamond ; and because these laws are few, they are better understood, and more religiously and scrupulously observed. The severity of the punishment inflicted for offences inspired reverence, and the infractions, consequently, are so few as not to imperil the safety of their constitution. Were they temporizing ? Did they think that the laws were not made for all times and for all places, Judaism would have been a thing of the past, and instead of explaining to you the causes which have kept the Hebrews a distinct people, I might, perhaps, have been making stump speeches to show the worthlessness and instability of all constitutions that may be broken at the option of a factious multitude. Very different, indeed, was it under the Jewish dispensation ; a single

word in that constitution, altered, was regarded by them as treason, and the guilty could find no expiation, but in death.

The pious Hebrew held those laws in the utmost reverence. He never reads them, but he thinks of the terrors of Sinai—the lightning that flashed, and the thunders that pealed, and the dark portentous clouds that rolled up its base, from which he imagines he hears the voice of God. He bequeaths his feelings and his sentiments to his children, and they in turn, to theirs. Their laws were not disposed of, like the Roman Emperor's, who placed them so high that the people could not read them. From the child to the hoary-headed follower of Moses were the Hebrew laws understood. The mother taught them to her children, and so familiar were these laws to their minds that they needed no commentary, as in our laws. These laws became a bond, a pillar of their liberty, the paladium of their nationality.

They were observed by the king as well as by the people; indeed the better to impress them upon the minds of their sovereigns, they were commanded to copy them. When you approach the Hebrews of to-day, and speak to them about their laws, they tell you with much complacency, that their laws have survived the crash of dynasties, and kingdoms, and thrones. They point you to the institutions of Numa, Solon, Lycurgus and Minos, which now exist but in name. They tell you that these laws were nothing more than religious fictions, or the inventions of political statesmen, which were unsupported by the grandeur of

miracles. The Hebrew in every breath inhales the spirit of the laws of Moses. These laws first shadowed forth the principle of a republic. They first taught self-government, and the art of preserving their nationality without a king, and without a country. We see in them the most remarkable evidence of the power of unity. The Rabbi, as he lingered among the ruins of ancient cities, gazing upon the broken columns, dilapidated edifices, crumbling arches, and moss-covered temples of nations once far advanced in civilization, little dreamed, perhaps, that his own stricken nation would survive the deluge of persecution through which it was destined to pass. But so it is; the Hebrews to-day number as many as they did in the most glorious period of their freedom.

The governments of the earth are various, and they are sustained either by fear, by patriotism, by honor, or by religion. The Republic is held by patriotism; the Monarchy by honor; the Despotic by fear; and the Theocratic by religion. The latter is the most permanent. It is blended with the religious creed of man; his hopes, and his fears; and the more pious they are, the stronger becomes their government. A government founded upon the religion of man, recognizing all as religiously and civilly free; holding God as supreme, and exacting absolute obedience to Him, must, from the very nature of the human mind, be a more popular and abiding government. And this will in some measure account for the continuance of the Jewish nationality. Moses, with that comprehensiveness of mind so peculiar to him as a legislator, guarded

against every contingency, that might lessen their reverence for his institution. The Eastern nations were cradled in Royalty. Kingdoms, Thrones and Empires were familiar to the imagination of the Hebrews; a love for regal splendor began to bud in their bosom, and a desire for a king ripened into a public expression of their feelings; and Moses, to gratify this wish, allowed them to choose a king; but that king was only nominal; he had no will of his own: the laws of Moses became his Constitution, and he had to obey them in common with his people. There was no ambition on the one side to over-ride the people, nor sedition on the other to dethrone the king. And hence, in Jewish history, we seldom read of regicides, or assassinations of their rulers. The Hebrews recognized their national rulers as the agents of God, placed over them by a special Providence; and they were accustomed to look through these agents up to God: consequently they felt themselves awed by the majesty of his power, who they knew would avenge with death the traitors of his laws.

These feelings were general, and they made no effort to conceal them. They contemplated no aggrandizement under religious sanctions and ceremonies. These laws were lisped by the infant. The minstrel would chant them, and the milk-maid, as she hied her homeward way, would repeat them. Their conceptions of God were of the purest and loftiest character. And if, by chance, they gazed upon the sky, and beheld the millions of stars that flooded it, or if they gazed upon the mild and silvery face of the moon and felt the soothing

powers of her reflected beams, or if they gazed upon the splendor of a summer's sunset sky, it was not to worship these. It was only as they recognized the glory of God in them, that their devotions flowed heavenward, and deepened and expanded, as they saw the power of God reflected in the works of his hands. Their religious feelings consecrated God, and they enjoyed the world only as they saw it through him. Hence the pious and devout Hebrew holds in contempt every form of idolatry, and would rather die than clothe the Deity in palpable form. On no consideration would he give him a habitation in temple made with hands, or enshrine him in breathing marble, or represent him upon the canvass. As he enters the portal of a cathedral, he feels a solemnity. The dim aisle, the frescoed wall create a sort of architectural devotion. He thinks of his own loved Temple, where his fathers once worshiped ; of the Holy of Holies, whose retreat was such, that none but the high-priest could enter, and that but once a year, to intercede for Israel. He sees the Shekinah, the mystical presence of Jehovah, and the two Cherubim with extended wings, overshadowing the mercy-seat. But in the very midst of these reflections, the green curtain rises, and he sees the Redeemer, the Saviour of mankind, the Christian Moses, painted in his passion. The unexpected appearance of this image, to say nothing of its religious impropriety, appals him. He feels that the Christian has degraded the Messiah ; that instead of painting him on canvass, they ought to enshrine him in their affections ; that his laws should rule their conduct ; that the

dove, the symbol of his religion, should brood over the altar of their spiritual Temple.

While these reflections are passing through his mind, the devout worshiper comes, and kneeling before the image crosses himself, and prays to it. In a moment more a penitent, with downcast eyes, enters the confessional, and receives absolution for his sins from the lips of the priest. The Hebrew, with his conception of God's spirituality, and the sacred grandeur of the Temple on Zion, with the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God was symbolized by the Shekinah, where the high-priest would bow upon his knees, and with weeping eyes importune for the forgiveness of Israel—turns pale at this presumption and mockery, and he rushes out of the cathedral, muttering to himself, "My God! is this thy Temple?" and not all the eloquence of the most gifted divine, not all the prophecies can persuade him, that such worship is purer than he sees in his own synagogue. Such, at least, was my impression, when in boyhood, I first entered a cathedral. Such appendages as picture worship and the Virgin Mary must circumscribe our conception of the spiritual character of Christ, while it fosters, justly or unjustly, the imputation of idolatry. "Thou shalt fall down and worship no graven image," is the law of God, and Christ said, "I came not to destroy the law, but to make it more honorable."

But there is another cause which we must notice. The Hebrews never fail to teach their children that they alone are the true people of God. They narrate in their hearing the covenant which God made with

Abraham ; the successful contest of the shepherd-boy, David, with Goliath ; the drowning of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea ; the successful journey of their fathers in the wilderness ; the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night ; the appearance of God to Moses in the burning bush ; the laws given on Mt. Sinai ; their victories over their enemies, in which a few put to flight thousands, and many other miraculous interferences in their behalf, in which care is taken to show that God is still near them in their wonderful preservation, as a people. The youthful mind drinks in these narratives ; a deep impression is made, which grows with their growth. To foster these impressions, and to show their sincerity, their fathers keep and make them keep the Sabbath and the feast-days with the greatest scrupulousness. They so speak and deport themselves as to make their children observe their national anniversaries with enthusiasm,—such as the Passover, when the destroying angel passed over their houses, that showed the consecrated token ; the sprinkling of blood ; the feast of Pentecost, which commemorates their national recognition as the people of God ; the feast of Tabernacles, that commemorates their enjoyment of the promised land ; the festival of the New Year, in which they engage in religious exercises for the universal diffusion of God's knowledge, and which associates the covenant of God with Abraham on Mt. Sinai ; the feast of the atonement, in which they afflict their bodies for their sins ; their return to Jerusalem after seventy years' bondage under the auspices of Cyrus ; the Purim, commemorative of the escape of

Mordecai from the murderous intention of Haman. It is needless to say that such festivities kept up from father to son, from generation to generation among the Hebrews all over the world, whether favored by civil enactments or persecuted, must, from the force of religious training and habit, keep them a distinct and separate people. Added to the religious power and training of these festivities, is the universal opinion which no force of argument can weaken, or dispersion destroy, that they are still, as ever, the peculiar and the only acknowledged people of God.

Another cause to which they may owe their preservation and distinctness, is the persecution, which as a people they experienced from time immemorial. Under every form of government they were proscribed; marks of indignity were heaped on them without measure. In some governments they were not allowed to hold real estate, and in London, in England, they were forced to occupy a particular part of the city or locality, and at one time the English government forced them to wear a particular colored hat. The Catholics in Spain and France were unrelenting in their persecutions. The soil of these countries was whitened with the bones of slaughtered Hebrews, and their rivers stained with their blood. England, who now favors them, was once their worst foe. In the dark ages, especially, in the period of the crusade, they knew no rest; but were robbed and plundered by religious fanatics, among whom the most prominent was Peter, the Hermit. The tragical scene of York in England, in which a whole community of Hebrews,

including the Priest, committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of the mob, attests their heroism and their devotion to the religion of their fathers. These persecutions so unprovoked, and so cruel, united the Hebrews in closer affection, cemented the tie of friendship among themselves, and created the impression that all Christians were in alliance to destroy them. They made no distinction between professors and non-professors. They condemned all for the misguided enthusiasm of the few. They regarded all as their unrelenting enemies. And it is very difficult for you to separate these acts from the Christian religion. You must judge the Hebrew by his religion, and not by your own, and consider how you would act, if placed under the same circumstances. These persecutions have had a tendency to repel the Hebrews from approaching Christianity. They were prejudiced against a religion, which trampled on the weak and unfortunate. You may tell them that these persecutions were not sanctioned by the spirit of Christianity, that they were the result of a barbarous age; but still they feel that they are dark and repulsive spots in our history, and the recollection of them serves, only to chill their feelings and check any rising desire to investigate the claims of Christianity. The same objections, however, cannot be urged by the Hebrews in the United States. Here, they are free and respected, and no laws, civil or ecclesiastical, restrain them in their freedom to worship God according to their pleasure.

Another cause, which has contributed much to their preservation and distinction, is their ignorance of the

prophecies. In many of their houses, they have no Bibles at all, unless some visitor, as was the case in our house, should secretly leave one, and which providentially served like a star to guide me into the truth. Their priests have always made it a point to evade the prophecies, and to attach a meaning to passages of Scripture entirely at variance with the laws of interpretation. We will mention one instance. The prophecy in Isaiah, which says that Christ shall be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that he shall die for the sins of the people, &c. This passage is so forcible, so clear, and so conclusive, that the Jewish Rabbis, in order to evade it, said there would be two Messiahs, one a man of sorrow, and the other of great renown. It is exceedingly difficult to force them to an honest and candid discussion of this subject. Whether the Rabbis are honest or not in their opposition to the Messiah, I cannot say; but I am persuaded of one thing, that the Hebrew people, generally, are as ignorant of the prophecies now, as in the olden time, when the priesthood became so corrupt that it was put up to public auction, and sold to the highest bidder.

As another evidence of the ignorance of the Hebrews, in regard to the prophecies, I will mention the case of Napoleon. Many of the Hebrews firmly believed that he was the Messiah. They were dazzled by the splendor of his achievements. Their expectations and their hopes were worked up to the highest point of excitement, and every victory of Napoleon served only to increase their enthusiasm; and the wily Emperor took advantage of their feelings, and appointed a

council to deliberate upon measures for their political elevation. The victory of his Marshall, Kleber, at Mt. Tabor, with only three thousand against twenty-five thousand Turks, electrified their bosoms, and from lip to lip it was shouted, "Napoleon is our Messiah." Many of them confidently expected that he would reinstate them in Jerusalem, with all their ancient glory and nationality, as Cyrus had done in their previous history. But the sequel proves that they were poor interpreters of the plans of God. There was a positive prophecy that such a person as Cyrus would arise and rebuild their temple, and reinstate them in their civil rights; but there is no such prophecy in relation to Napoleon and themselves. At any rate, they ought to have known that Napoleon could not be the Messiah promised to them; for that Messiah was to be born in the town of Bethlehem, and Napoleon was born on the Island of Corsica. The Messiah was to be of the Hebrew nation, and of the tribe of Judah; Napoleon belonged to the French nation, and of the Gentiles. The Messiah was to come while the second Temple was yet standing; that temple was destroyed seventeen hundred years before the birth of Napoleon. The Messiah was to make his appearance at the time the civil power departed from the hands of the Hebrews. Napoleon made his appearance about eighteen hundred years after, and the same remark will apply to the many pretenders who succeeded the Messiah. The terrible sufferings through which the Hebrews passed in adhering to these false Messiahs, have seriously modified their desire to follow every pretender. They have be-

come incredulous. They have settled down into a condition in which they stand poised between hope and despair. I conversed with an intelligent Hebrew, the pastor of a city church, on the subject of the Messiah. I asked him the following question: "Do you expect, sir, the Messiah to come? The prophecies are out of date." He was silent, when I added: "He could not prove himself to be the Messiah, if he were to come." "O," said he, "the Messiah is to come morally." And, I am sorry to say, that such is the method which some employ to evade the prophecies, and not until there is more candor among them, can you expect a reformation in their religious views. The charge, "My people do not consider," is as strong to-day against them, as in the days of the prophets.

It seems to be the purpose of God that the Hebrews shall remain a distinct people for the present, to be a witness for the divinity of Christ, to act as a flank movement against the advances of infidelity, for their distinctness and separation, as a people, in view of the prophecies, form a monumental evidence in support of the truth of Christianity. They do not mean by their conduct to aid and sustain the claims of the Messiah; but they have, and are still doing so, as though their distinctness was intended for this purpose. God often blinds our counsels, and makes us ignorantly act in conformity to his plans. He makes the wrath of man to praise him. The Apostles, in connection with Christ, are the foundation of the Christian Church. It was laid in Jewish blood; the Gentile world is to form the body of this church, and the present Hebrews are to

compose its steeple. The body of this Christian Temple—this spiritual structure is not yet completed, but is culminating to its final consummation, and when the Great Architect, the Holy Redeemer, shall pronounce its body completed, then will the Hebrews be brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles, to form the steeple of this noble edifice. Their conversion will take place rapidly, and they will hasten from the four quarters of the globe, and bring forth the royal diadem, and crown the Messiah Lord of all. When they are thus converted to Christianity, and the Spiritual Temple is completed in all its departments, then will the Saviour make his second appearance, and the Hebrews, congregated into one body as Christians, will migrate to Jerusalem, and Christ will reign in person. The prophecy relating to his second coming is yet to be fulfilled. He is to come in the same manner in which he left. He ascended from Mt. Olivet in a cloud, and he will come again in a cloud. Nations are to be gathered against Jerusalem; but the Lord shall go forth and battle with them; so Zechariah says, and his feet shall stand on Mt. Olivet. When this takes place the earth is not to be annihilated, as is supposed, but only purified from sin, made holy. The wilderness shall blossom as the rose; the righteous shall then flourish, and peace shall be in the land; the lamb and the lion shall lie down together, and Christ shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

When this second advent is to take place we do not know; but it will not be long deferred after the conversion of the Gentile world. Science will then prove

herself to be the hand-maid of religion. The progress which she is now making, and which is made use of for commercial purposes, will be employed to consummate the prophecies. The earth will be filled with the glory of God, and sanctified minds will consecrate science to advance the end of religion. The electric spark will flash along the telegraphic wires through the civilized world, and every part of the globe will resound with the second advent of Christ. And the Hebrews, in a few moments scattered to the winds of heaven, shall hear with ecstasy the tidings of the second coming of Christ. They will be made willing in the day of God's power, to hail him as their Prince ; and the prophecies relating to their return to Jerusalem will then be fulfilled. Steamboats, constructed with no reference to this grand design, but from commercial purposes, will throng our rivers and harbors, of twice the dimension and twice the speed ; and the scattered and long-neglected Hebrews will, in a week or two, find themselves in their time-consecrated city, Jerusalem, looking upon Him whom their fathers once pierced ; but now exalted to be a Prince. Palestine shall once more be theirs ; the long-neglected Palestine, the cradle of their religion and nationality, shall bloom again, shall resume its former loveliness. Christ shall sit upon the throne of David, and the Hebrews, converted to the Christian faith, will say, "Not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory."

Truth is stranger than fiction ; and let us not stand to question this glorious change in the future condition of Israel, when we have seen as startling events in the

his'ory of our times. Had I predicted that the African population of South Carolina would rule this State ; that they would fill the places in our legislative halls once occupied by some of our most distinguished citizens ; that they, in fact, would be our political masters, you would have said : " The thing is impossible, and I must be a madman for saying so ;" yet it has come to pass, and there was no prophecy to this effect ; but there is a prophecy that the Hebrews shall return to Jerusalem at the second coming of Christ, and Mt. Olivet shall be the centre of his throne.

And the Providence of God, too, seems to provide for such a state of things, by keeping the Hebrews stationary in their population. Palestine will be as formerly. Her rich soil, with the improved modes of agriculture, will yield abundance. The two continents will seem like one ; communication will be so frequent that the personal presence of Christ will seem universal. Transportation will be so cheap that visits to Jerusalem will be like excursions. Popes and Cardinals will be things of the past, and Christ will be the true Pope, infallible, immortal. Men will be purer and holier than they now are. They will be sanctified from their births, like Samuel, Jeremiah, and John the Baptist. Satan shall be bound, hand and foot, and the earth shall be filled with the glory of God. Then we shall see eye to eye. Persecution will be a thing of the past, and the Hebrew will see that the religion of Christ, which was symbolized by a dove, is what it purports to be ; " Peace on earth and good-will to men." There will be no smoking altars ; no Holy of Holies ; no especial

place for the high-priest to officiate ; but every spot on earth will be consecrated by the prayers of a devout people, and Christ will rule King of nations, as he is now King of saints.

“ Lord, for those days we wait ; those days
Are in thy word foretold ;
Fly swifter, sun and stars, and bring
This promised age of gold.

“ Then, Judah, thou no more shalt mourn
Beneath the heathen’s chain ;
Thy days of splendor shall return,
And all be new again.”

LECTURE II.

WHITEFIELD, DR. THOMAS CHALMERS AND
ROBERT HALL

AS PULPIT ORATORS.

It is conceded by all who reflect, that the power of the pulpit is not as great now as formerly. The sermons, generally, are too artistic, and too little regard is paid to oratory. Some have thought that our advancement in civilization does not require those appeals to the passions, which in a less cultivated age were practicable. As for myself, I think there is just as great necessity for pulpit oratory now, as formerly ; for we find that he who excels in this oratory, attracts more attention, and is more successful. It forms no part of my business to inquire into the degeneracy of the pulpit, though I think this is owing much to the training of our young ministers. To be taught the art of pulpit oratory, one must be placed under an orator for instruction, in connection with his Theological studies. The power of the pulpit has gradually diminished, and effective preachers, such as flourished some fifty years ago, are now seldom to be found.

The reformation inaugurated by Luther, awoke to life the lethargy of the pulpit, and many an able advocate battled zealously for the restoration of primi-

tive Christianity. In Germany, we are struck with the power of Luther, with the pathos of Tholuck, with the elegance of Therman, and with the tenderness of Krummacher. In England, we admire the exuberant fancy of Jeremy Taylor; the searching and trenchant power of Baxter; the melodious strains of Flavel; the ingenious and sermonizing powers of South; the erudite and eloquent discourses of Barrow; the diamond-like clearness and force of Wesley; the grandeur and elegance of Robert Hall. In Scotland, we are introduced to the rugged and effective eloquence of John Knox; the zeal of Erskine; the graceful beauty of Logan; the force of Thomson, and the magnificent eloquence of Chalmers. In France, we are raptured with the genius and lofty inspiration of Bossuet; the eloquent and generous Flechier; the pure and lofty discourses of Bourdaloue; the elastic, elegant, and powerful style of Massillon. In Switzerland, we have the sterling eloquence of Monod; the graceful and animated diction of Merle D'Aubigné; the beauty and picturesqueness of Gaussen. In the United States, we record the names of Jonathan Edwards, Emmons, Payson, Channing, Mason, Wayland, Hopkins, Spring and Durbin. These ministers are models—they have left a record for eloquence and ability which we will do well to emulate.

George Whitefield was born in Gloucester, England, on the 16th of December, 1714. His father died when he was very young, and his mother raised him with devotional tenderness. At an early age he gave unmistakable signs of capacity, and excelled in the art of declamation. The progress which he made in his

studies was highly satisfactory ; but the pressure of circumstances forced him to suspend them for a time, which afterwards he resumed with little interruption. In his seventeenth year, he became a member of the Church of England, and in his twenty-second year was ordained to the ministry. So effective were his pulpit efforts, that many thousands are said to have been converted. After a career of much popularity, he espoused Methodism, and became a laborious co-worker with Wesley. This friendship was interrupted by the adherence of Whitefield to Calvinism, and these two great luminaries moved in different orbits.

Open field preaching may be dated from the time Whitefield and Wesley espoused Methodism. This period dates a new era in the history of the pulpit. Moorfield, Kennington, and Blackheath were the principal fields, on which these stars in the ministry displayed their powers. Thousands crowded these fields, and few left them without being deeply affected. It is a pleasing task to contemplate the character of Mr. Whitefield. It seems as if God raised him up, just for that purpose, to inspire the pulpit with life and vigor, and to teach that Christianity is not a form, but a power. As a minister, he owed his success more to his simple, earnest, and impassioned manner, than to any special art of the orator. He possessed a large share of common sense, was well read in literature, and well acquainted with the human heart. His eloquence was not lofty, nor nervous and inspiring, like Massillon ; but it was pungent and direct, rolling on like a powerful wave, that would dash and break, and unite and

dash and break, till it had conquered its foe. At times his eye would flash and his voice would roll like distant thunder.

The natural structure of his mind was not logical nor sublime. He could not aspire to the eminence of Jeremy Taylor for elegance and fancy, nor to any of the more distinguished orators of France. His style was more diffusive than compact, and more impressive than argumentative. He possessed a peculiar faculty of impressing incidents into his sermons to illustrate a truth, and enforce the morality of the Bible. He had a ready faculty of adapting himself to circumstances. He could be sublime at times, but that was not his forte. He understood the art of flanking the sinner; of trailing him to his lurking places; of besieging him; of storming his intrenchments, and hurling him from the pedestal of his self-righteousness. He possessed the peculiar art of saying the right thing at the right time, and in the right place. He was quick to perceive where advantage might be taken to impress a truth or introduce an illustration. He was not so burdened with thoughts, so full of them, that he could not take up with incidental ones. He laid a contribution upon every thing to give power and efficiency to his ministry. There are some minds that are great only on great occasions. They require some lofty theme to stimulate their powers and inflame their passions. Such, however, was not the case with Mr. Whitefield; from the most barren texts he could gather materials, which, thrown off in the form of sermons, would produce the most happy effects. His gestures were easy and natural; a

dignified grace pervaded every movement of the body, and his fine countenance glowed with an expression of frankness, that gave to his pulpit efforts the most happy results.

It is said that no true eloquence can exist without moral virtues. Now and then we may see vicious men pouring forth a flood of eloquence that may startle us; but, for the time being, their bad qualities are darkened by the splendor of their efforts. True eloquence must have its foundation in real or affected virtue. To Mr. Whitefield belonged, in an eminent degree, the higher qualities of the Christian gentleman. He was tender in his nature, liberal and forbearing, and seemed rather to belong to all denominations, than to any particular one. He had a living, glowing piety; a strong and vigorous faith. He could see further into the relation of repentance and peace than most men. He drank deeper of the fountain of inspiration, and could see dangers that were shrouded from the vision of others. Possessing a tender sensibility, he poured out his soul, like Jeremiah, in pathetic strains and affectionate entreaties. He was very far from being a fanatic. He was calm, thoughtful, dignified; thoroughly acquainted with the human heart; knew its strong and weak points, and generally spoke with much enthusiasm. He had a voice of great depth and compass, with every variety of modulation. He could elevate it and make it pour forth in strains, like the deep swell of the organ, or he could breathe it forth in the sweet, soft, mellow strains of the Æolian harp. When elevated in his feelings, when his faith winged its upper flight, and the

terribleness of eternity beamed upon his vision, he indulged in strains of eloquence that would startle his audience; his very countenance seemed to glow with angelic light. Few, very few, could listen to him at such times without being deeply affected.

His manner in the pulpit was somewhat dramatic, and his representations very life-like. He had the singular faculty of creating in the minds of his audience the forms and incidents which he narrated. Chesterfield, the model of the English gentleman, heard him on one occasion preach. Mr. Whitefield was comparing the condition of a lost sinner to one walking upon a precipice in his sleep. His description was so exciting that the nobleman really thought that he saw the veritable sinner before him, and when Whitefield described him as taking the last and final step over the precipice, and exclaiming, with a countenance full of the deepest anxiety, "There he falls;" Chesterfield started to his feet, exclaiming, "Save him! save him!" But there was a greater triumph than this reserved for him. He solicited assistance of Benjamin Franklin, the philosopher, to aid his institution in Georgia. Franklin declined, unless upon changes suggested by him, to which Whitefield objected. Franklin went to hear him preach. In his pockets he had copper, silver, and gold coins. He was decided not to give anything. The orator, however, had not advanced far when Franklin relented, and concluded to give the coppers, then the silver coins, and finally the gold. The true orator can hardly fail to carry his point. He will insinuate himself into the feelings, will worm himself into the

conscience and with a masterly hand will mould his audience into his mode of thinking.

Mr. Whitefield's mind was not of a philosophical cast. He was not versed in natural science. He could not lay claim to great originality; nor had he the scholastic acquirements of Wesley. He had, however, a far-reaching intellectual eye, by which he gathered materials from distant sources, and bringing them to a point, pressed them with striking effect upon the minds of his audience. His pictures of the death-bed scene—the struggle of the dying sinner—the grave—the angel of wrath—the flames of perdition—the howlings of the lost, and all the terribleness of eternity, would be so life-like and so urgently pressed upon the sinner, that he would become restless and almost frightened into obedience. He would sometimes lead them to the cross by strains of pathetic tenderness; but as a general thing, he called to his aid the thunders of God's wrath, and made them willing in the day of his power.

And, after all, there was no visible artifice to work upon the passions of his audience. It was truth in its simplicity, without the adornment of rhetoric. He believed what he said, and he felt what he said; and hence he often indulged in exclamations and appeals. He was a terror among the wicked, and his success in making converts among them excited their hatred. He said to a friend, that on one occasion his courage nearly failed him. He was preaching in the open air; a crowd of disorderly persons were advancing towards him with evil designs—his voice trembled; his wife, who stood just behind him, saw he was disturbed, and seizing him by the

gown, which he usually wore on such occasions, pulled it, saying at the same time, "John, play the man this time." The words of that wife roused him ; his voice pealed forth in thunders of denunciations, and the disorderly crowd were awed into passiveness. There never was a man, since the days of the Apostles, whose preaching produced such wonderful effect. He seemed on no occasion to fail ; but to move and sway his audience at his will.

I am indebted to a Methodist paper for the substance of the following fact. He was preaching in the city of Boston during a thunder-storm. The house shook from dome to floor, and his audience became alarmed. He stepped back a few paces and prayed. In the temporary lull of the storm, he gave out the following hymn :

"Hark ! the Eternal rends the sky,
A mighty voice before Him goes ;
A voice of music to His friends,
But threatening thunder to His foes.

"Come, children, to your Father's arms,
Hide in the chambers of His grace,
Till the fierce storm be overblown,
And my revenging fury cease."

The effect of this hymn sung to the tune of Old Hundred was electric. Their bosoms heaved under the swell of religious emotions. Soon, those dark clouds began to break, and the sharp peals of thunder died away into faint and distant murmurs. The sun burst through the cloudy garment that had concealed it, and there stood in loveliness a gorgeous rainbow.

The noble preacher, true to his art, seized the occasion to produce another effect, and pointing his audience to that beautiful bow, reminded them, that it was a pledge of God's unchanging love. The transition from fear to admiration was instantaneous. Emotions of dread gave place to those of confidence and love, and the preacher, through the agency of this providential event, added another gem to beautify and enlarge his reputation.

I cannot pass over in silence an event, which, though not possessing the same interest, because not generally known, yet furnishes us with a striking illustration of the moral sublime. Rev. Dr. R. Fuller of Baltimore is known among Baptists, generally, in the United States, as one among our most effective preachers. He took passage for Europe. The vessel in which he sailed encountered a dreadful storm. The waves beat wrathfully against the frail ship, and tossed her upon the sea like a bubble. The shrouds howled under the fierceness of the blast, and the timbers creaked and groaned in every joint. The scene was terrible. Brave men stood trembling; their faces turned pale; their bosoms heaved under the throbbings of their hearts, and death seemed inevitable. The preacher, true to the injunction, "Be instant in season and out of season," clasped one of the masts with his left arm, and with his right, gesticulated, and exhorted the men, while the tears were bathing his cheeks, to prepare for death. There was more moral sublimity in this scene than in Mr. Whitefield's thunder-storm sermon. The time, the place, the circumstance invest it with a higher order

of moral grandeur and heroism. It was a practical test in its most terrible form of the vigor of his faith and the fidelity of his calling. The records of eternity may show that that extraordinary effort was not without the most happy effects.

DR. THOMAS CHALMERS.

Dr. Chalmers was born in Scotland at Anstruther, in Fifeshire, on March 17th, 1780. He was in Scotland, as a preacher, what Robert Hall was in England. They were contemporaries, though Mr. Hall was something older. Dr. Chalmers died near Edinburgh, May 31st, 1848, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. He very justly enjoyed a high reputation as a preacher. Some of the most distinguished men of his age heard him not only with interest, but with pleasure, and some with admiration. Critics, philosophers, and statesmen were charmed with the splendor of his discourses. For fifteen years he was professor at Edinburgh. His astronomical discourses were more popular than the Waverley Novels. Twenty thousand of these discourses were sold in less than one year. Hazlitt, Wilberforce, Channing, Robert Hall, John Foster, Jeffrey, and Lockhart were often his hearers and admirers.

The mind of Dr. Chalmers was undoubtedly cast in a fine mould. There were symmetry, beauty, and a genius, which, if not as creative as Pascal's or Shakespeare's, was, at least, very little inferior to either. His mind was rich in classical literature, and his knowledge of theology was accurate and extensive, while

his large acquaintance with science gave him an enviable distinction. Possessed of vast materials, and a mind thoroughly disciplined, he became an intellectual giant. He was at home in every department of literature. He could entertain philosophers with the subtleties of metaphysical arguments, or gratify the most fastidious taste with the lofty melody of his language. To a mind enriched with the gems of literature, he added a child-like sweetness of temper. His preparations for the pulpit and lecture-room were always thorough. He drank deeply of the fountain of inspiration, and his expositions of the Bible were always fresh and interesting. Like other great men of liberal views, he believed in civil and religious freedom, as the proper condition to develop the powers of man morally and religiously. His religious character bore a striking resemblance to his intellectual, in loftiness and symmetry. He possessed fervency and intensity, but he never exceeded the boundary of propriety. His moral nature would sometimes gush out in refreshing streams, sometimes blaze like the evening star, and sometimes would assume the gorgeous beauty of the rainbow ; but never, the appearance of the thunder-cloud. He was as much loved out of the pulpit as in it. The eminence to which he rose was not sought after by him from motives of ambition, but rather as an instrument to advance his usefulness. He knew that man's power was in proportion to his sanctified ability ; that learning, consecrated by piety, made man more influential ; and though it increased his responsibility, yet enhanced the chances of reward, and

opened a wider field for the display of a divine approbation. The sense of his responsibility led him to make extraordinary efforts to meet public expectation. He wrote, studied, and preached with an industry almost unexampled. He reflected upon the intellectual necessities of the age and sought to strike out some more fascinating mode of preaching, which, while it did not compromise the truth, yet made it more attractive. He rejected the fanciful exuberance of the more flippant French preachers, and the too cold and prolix style of the English divines. He amalgamated them, then chiselled them down to due proportions, polished them with the graces of rhetoric, and presented us with a style as beautiful and attractive for the pulpit, as Sir Walter Scott had done in novel-writing for the world of fiction. Hence his ministry forms a new era in pulpit oratory.

Dr. Chalmers was not a revivalist in the American acceptance of that term. He was ardent and vehement; but he practiced no art to stir the passions of his audience. He was inferior to Jonathan Edwards as a logician, and I think, also, less pointed and effective, though more popular, more dazzling, more attractive, and more sublime. In some respects, there was a resemblance between him and Massillon, though Massillon was more forcible and impressive, and had a larger share of pulpit strategy. Chalmers was, like the kaleidoscope, ever beautiful, whichever way the intellectual eye may view him. His gems were always rich, varied and splendid, and never produced satiety.

As textual preachers, Melvill and Jay were his superiors ; but his inferiors in grandeur of thought and felicity of expression. John Foster, the English divine, and author of "Decision of Character," was more original, but not so lofty and impassioned. Jeremy Taylor possessed a more exuberant fancy, but he had not the organ-like melody of Chalmers. If he (Chalmers) had not the depth of Vinet, he surpassed him in the beauty and elegance of expression. If he had not the polish and compactness of Hall, he was his superior in naturalness of expression, and in the fervor and energy of his style. The amplification of his mode of preaching may be considered a defect, yet we know that it is an invaluable gift among orators to intensify a leading idea or thought,—to press it home by illustrations until it assumes a palpable form, having, as it were, a habitation and a name in the minds of his audience.

The splendor of his language did not obscure the force and beauty of his thoughts; a diamond-like brilliancy surrounded them, and threw its coruscations over the memory of his audience, not easily to be forgotten. He had the peculiar faculty of reducing the most incongruous and chaotic materials into order, beauty and symmetry, and to classify and methodize every topic; and make the darkest subject transparent to the dullest intellect. The bursts of enthusiasm that irradiated his thoughts for a moment, were not the glow of a meteoric fancy, but the coruscations of an exalted imagination. He always soared high; and with his lofty thoughts and rich sonorous diction would elevate

his hearers to himself. If he erred at all, it was on the side of grandeur.

He seems not to have had any particular model before him, but to have combined all parts of excellencies, and formed his style upon his own ideal model of beauty, to inflame his imagination and intensify his eloquence. Had he the searching power of Whitefield, the conciseness and rhetorical beauty of Hall, the compact unity of Wesley, the force and energy of Baxter, and the unction of Payson, he would have been everywhere acknowledged the Demosthenes of the pulpit. As it is, however, very few, if any, have surpassed him. The popularity of Dr. Chalmers was owing chiefly to the melody of his style, and the intense fervor of his manner. His energy knew no abatement. He would hurry you on from one scene of beauty to another, until he would bewilder you with the luxury of his thoughts. The diffusion of his style was a defect, but was compensated by the interest which he awakened. If he took you over more ground to show you his gems, he gave you more time to study and appreciate them. If he travelled further for arguments, he made the journey more picturesque, and the entertainment more agreeable and instructive.

His acquaintance, too, with natural science, especially astronomy, added much to his power. With a mind trained to the investigation of abstract truths, and disciplined by a rigid application of the best mode of attaining the style of a lofty eloquence, he could demonstrate the necessity of Christian duty and evangelical morality. When the infidel asserted, that God

would not care for so small a planet as ours to provide a Saviour, when there are so many others of superior dimensions and splendor, it was Dr. Chalmers who met this objection by calling attention to the microscope, that revealed to us in infinitesimal numbers the minute existences of organic life. Invisible as they are to the natural eye, yet sharing the protection of God in common with ourselves, why should not man bearing the moral image of God be viewed as favorably as the higher order of intelligences? Dr. Chalmers stands very much in relation to the religious world as Newton to the philosophical. After all, it will be very difficult to convey to your minds any just idea of him as a preacher. You must see him and hear him. His appearance in the pulpit, his gestures, his features, his voice, his articulation, his strategy, his advances, his retreats, his forced marches, his ambuscades, must all pass in review, before we can appreciate his power as a pulpit orator. We know him only through his writings, and we can imagine from these and the testimony of others his character as a preacher. It is conceded, however, that in all that constitutes a pulpit orator, he was a star of the highest magnitude.

REV. ROBERT HALL.

However pleasing it may be to my feelings to continue my notice of Dr. Chalmers, I must call your attention to Mr. Robert Hall of England, whose reputation as a man of genius was unquestioned. He was born at Ainsbay on the 2d of May, 1764, and was about sixteen years older than Dr. Chalmers. In his infancy

he was sickly, and strong fears were entertained that he would not live. He was placed in the hands of a nurse, who often took him to a grave-yard, and there made use of the letters on the tomb-stones to teach him the alphabet. At school he made great proficiency in his studies, and his teachers found it difficult to keep pace with him. Though possessing, naturally, a fine imagination, yet he was fond of metaphysical subjects; and before he was ten years old he had mastered Edwards on "The Affections," and "Butler's Analogy of Religion." In England, where intellectual merit is fostered and pensioned, it was not long before Mr. Hall began to excite attention, and draw around him such men as Dr. Johnson, McIntosh, Edmund Burke, Dr. Ryland, Dr. Gregory, Dr. Evans, Erskine, Thomson and others. Strangers, attracted to his church from his great reputation, were often disappointed in the beginning of his sermons. He spoke low, and with some hesitation; but as he advanced in his subject, his feelings would warm up, his imagination would break into brilliant coruscations, and his whole body seemed to glow with the fervor of animation. As to his features, they were large and full, and corresponded with the massive structure of his mind.

If you ask me what it was that gave to Mr. Hall this wonderful power in the pulpit, I would say it was his genius, his splendid imagination, his richly cultivated intellect, and his enthusiasm. If you ask what is eloquence, I answer in the language of another, "It is rhetoric set on fire." In the more elevated forms of eloquence, there must be noble thoughts, lofty emo-

tions, inspiring diction, which like the electric spark must flash from one mind to another, communicating like effects. A beautiful rose, a flowery landscape, a lovely face, a noble act are said to be eloquent, because they affect us, and infuse something of their own beauty within us. Our very silence may be eloquent. But that man who has the noblest nature, the finest intellect, the purest morals, the greatest art to communicate his thoughts, and infuse his own emotions into the bosom of others, will be the most eloquent. The subject and the occasion, though not the cause of eloquence, are accessories. The more noble the subject, the more interest at stake, the greater will be the effect. If it be true of the poet that he must be born such, it is equally true of the orator. There is no royal road to oratory. It is a gift which must be perfected by patient application of approved rules.

No one enjoys higher advantages for the display of oratorical powers than the minister of the Gospel. He is always assisted by the subject, and often by the occasion; and if he fails to produce an impression, it is because he lacks capacity and enthusiasm. Trivial as it may seem, there can be no success without enthusiasm. Sermons delivered in a cold and formal manner will produce little effect. Enthusiasm is to the speaker what the steam is to the engine. Fire will communicate fire. So will one soul burning with eloquence communicate itself to another. When the conceptions are lofty, when the emotions are pure, when the soul is aglow with the warmth of a holy inspiration, it forms a connection with the outer auditory world, like the

magnetic pole, conveying intellectual and moral electricity from bosom to bosom. Hence eloquence is creative and sympathetic. It elevates and ennobles our feelings, inspires us with loftier sentiments, and imparts a higher order of felicity. It was this kind of eloquence that distinguished these three great luminaries of the pulpit, viz. : Whitefield, Hall, and Chalmers. Of the three, Mr. Hall may be considered the most finished and accurate, though not the most effective. He seems to have rejected the unpolished periods of Whitefield, and the somewhat greater diffusiveness of Chalmers. He blended them, modified them, reduced them to symmetry, and wore them as the legitimate productions of his own creative genius. As a familiar illustration of the distinction in these three orators, I would say : The efforts of Mr. Whitefield were like a number of drums, fifes, flutes, clarionets, tamborines, all in full blast, yet all in concert, with feet beating to the time. The efforts of Dr. Chalmers were like the organ in its full melody, rolling, and swelling, and pealing, rising and falling with its sonorous cadences, in which the harp and accordion are blended, making luxurious music. The efforts of Mr. Hall were like a trained and skilful band of musicians, each an amateur, with perfect instruments, chiming in at the right time and place, producing one grand chorus, transporting and electrifying.

It is conceded that Mr. Hall is the most finished of the three, and that he will be read and admired when the others are neglected. Even before his voice began to peal out its rich music, the attention was fixed, and

every countenance betrayed the deepest anxiety to hear him. And when he rose to his sublimest strains, when his eyes began to flash, when his features were all aglow, when his very body seemed to throw off the scintillations of his burning thoughts, when every nerve seemed to thrill under the inspiration of his subject, there was a profound and thoughtful silence, like that which nature feels, when she is about collecting her energies to develop some grand result. Hence long before the sermon was concluded, many of his auditors rose to their feet, unconscious of the power that had transformed them into groups of living statues. This wonderful power is in part to be ascribed to his piety, the grandeur of his thoughts, the elegance of his composition, his vivid imagination, and his well-sustained enthusiasm. He never stopped like Chalmers and Massillon to display a few gems, until you became acquainted with their merits. His casket was too full. He scattered them around you with the greatest profusion, and assigned to you the task of gathering them up and luxuriating in the beauty and splendor of their brilliancy. He knew well, as a finished orator, that intellectual taste, fine rhetoric, burning thoughts, glowing illustrations, classical diction were necessary to success; and these he sought after, cultivated and carried to the highest point of perfection, and consecrated them by a living piety. Though he was not instrumental in converting as many as Mr. Whitefield and Dr. Ryland, yet he attracted those to the sanctuary who would not otherwise attend. The brilliancy of his talents, the splendor of his imagination, the elegance

of his diction, the massive grandeur of his thoughts, and his lofty eloquence, produced a magnetic influence among men of letters, and thus gave him an opportunity to impress them with the moral grandeur of Christianity.

As the stars of heaven are not all of the same magnitude and brilliancy, yet each fulfills its mission, so have Whitefield, Hall and Chalmers gloriously accomplished the work assigned them by the great Head of the Church. They may differ in magnitude and lustre; but the world is none the less benefited by the converging splendor of their labors. Perfection is not the lot of man, and, unfortunately for Mr. Hall, he was in one point defective as a preacher. He was too mild and sparing in the denunciation of sin. He was too afraid to offend his hearers. He showed the evil of sin more, as reflected in the magnitude of the remedy, than in the evil of sin itself. He probed the sinner's heart deep at times; but his mistaken tenderness would lead him to cover up the wounds with the roses of rhetoric. He wielded a mighty sword; but it was festooned with garlands and ribbons of a refined diction that dulled its edge. He did much good; but not in proportion to his wonderful talents and abilities. He was sometimes too addicted to the habit of flattering royalty. In this respect, he showed himself inferior to Massillon, to whom he was superior in genius, imagination, and grasp of thought.

It was before the court of Louis XIV. of France that Massillon was invited to preach. The royal audience was most elegantly dressed. Men of fashion

and literature were present. The speaker rose in the pulpit and announced for his text—"Blessed are they that mourn." A shade of disappointment mantled their features; but it was not long before that momentary cloud was dissipated by the sunshine of a beautiful exordium. "Sire," said he, "if the world were about to address you, it would not say, blessed are they that mourn, but blessed is the Prince, who never fought but to conquer, who filled the universe with his name. But, Sire, Jesus Christ speaks not as the world speaks. Blessed, says Christ, not he who enjoys the admiration of the world, but he who makes preparation for the world to come; who lives in humility and is an heir of the kingdom of heaven." A eulogy so ingeniously blended with admonition, did not fail to make a happy impression upon the minds of his royal audience. "Sire," said the king, "when I hear other men preach, I am pleased with them; but when I hear you preach, I am displeased with myself."

It was just here, I think, Mr. Hall failed. His audience, with few exceptions, were all pleased with him rather than displeased with themselves. He had not the artistic skill to convert incidents into the elements of pulpit power. He was too burdened with his subject to engraft incidental thoughts and allusions. He would not allow himself to be diverted from the leading ideas of his subject, which he had wrought out with laborious patience. As a sample of his more labored composition, I give the following: "The impassioned eloquence, the daring heroism, the exalted patriotism so eminent among the early Greeks and

Romans, owed their origin to those ideal models of perfection that were always present to their imagination."

Mr. Hall did not consider it inconsistent with the ministerial office to speak and write on political questions. He regarded this as a part of the Gospel, as a means of giving moral tone to society ; hence some of his writings are political. He was a warm advocate of civil and religious freedom. These he considered as essential to the purity and development of Christianity. Apostolic succession, and the pretensions of the Church of Rome, he discussed with candor, and sometimes with severity. The cause of public education among the poor, the cause of missions, the freedom of the press, and the right of public discussion, he defended with an ability that must long command public attention. These efforts will long endear the memory of this gifted orator, and will remain the most splendid monuments of his genius.

In conclusion, I would say, that there are some points of resemblance between these three great luminaries of the pulpit. Mr. Whitefield began to preach when he was twenty-two, Mr. Chalmers, when he was twenty-one, and Mr. Hall, when he was sixteen. All three lived in exciting times, and were more or less involved in church differences. Whitefield sided with Wesley, Chalmers with the Free Church of Scotland, and Hall with the open communionists. Whitefield lived to the age of fifty-six, Chalmers to the age of sixty-four, and Hall to the age of sixty-eight. Chalmers and Hall were both unconverted when called to

the ministry, and after their conversion they both displayed a similar zeal. These three great and good men died suddenly, as if God for their labors would spare them the agony of a protracted sickness. The world will not immediately behold such pulpit orators as these three eminent men were. Canning has risen up in Scotland, but he is not equal to his predecessor. Spurgeon has acquired much reputation as a preacher in England, but he fades in comparison with Mr. Hall. No one has yet risen, who presumes to be superior to Mr. Whitefield. He stands solitary, alone, and unapproachable. With truth, he is the Demosthenes of the pulpit, Chalmers, the Cicero, and Hall, the Webster. Whitefield is like the old Roman knight, heavily armed, whose weight alone is sufficient to crush out his foes. Chalmers is like the knight of the Temple, with boots, and spurs, and highly polished spear, that dazzlingly flashes in the sunlight. Hall is like Bayard, the modern knight, of sublime bearing, who wields a Damascus blade, that gleams like a diamond from point to hilt. Neither, separately considered, can be said to be perfect; exclude their imperfections, and combine their better qualities, and they will form the most splendid model of pulpit oratory.

SABBATH-SCHOOL ADDRESS.

DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING OF THE 18TH OF OCTOBER,
1874, BEFORE THE BARNWELL SABBATH-SCHOOL CONVENTION,
CONVENED IN THE SEVEN PINES CHURCH.

THE work in which we are engaged is one of moral grandeur—one which has engaged the talents and wealth of some of our most gifted men, both in Europe and America. Mr. Raikes has the honor of being the first who instituted the Sabbath-school. The uneducated children of the poor arrested his attention. The benevolence of his nature led him to gather them on the Sabbath, and teach them the elements of the English language. From this humble beginning the Sabbath-school rose in importance. The Churches began to recognize them in a favorable light, and to cherish them as nurseries to replenish their depleted ranks. These schools have grown upon our affection, and now they stand before us as monuments of our well-directed and concentrated effort. That false delicacy which forbade the mingling of the sexes in the prosecution of their studies, was broken by the Sabbath-school system, which blended them, and so became a precursor of a new era in the destiny of woman. In the most enlightened period of Grecian and Roman

history she was denied the advantages of a liberal education. Under the Jewish dispensation, though she was highly respected, yet the culture of her mental faculties was grossly neglected; and even after the publication of Christianity she moved in a darkened sphere until the Reformation dawned, and the Sabbath-school system opened a field for the exercise of her faculties. She now moves in a higher sphere, and is hailed by man with pleasure as an assistant, a co-worker in teaching the young how to venerate the institutions of God.

Man is an intellectual being—his reasoning faculties give him power over nature, and he can explore her hidden recesses, and multiply the sources of his own happiness, and add to the felicity of others. Alone he may with a cultivated mind enter into the inner chamber of his soul, and hold communion with departed worth; may muse upon the infinite variety of things; may find a language in a flower, in a running stream, in a falling meteor, or in a wandering comet; and from these physical objects he may look up to God, the source of all created excellence, and find in Him a fountain of inexhaustible glories that may engage his profoundest contemplation. The exercise of reflection, while it pleases, will at the same time expand his mental powers, ennoble his faculties, refine his taste, and inspire him with a love for what is true and beautiful. An educated mind makes man independent of external associations and combinations for his happiness, and influences him to lean more upon himself for enjoyment than upon others. By the impressions of lofty ideas,

it elevates his character, brings him more under spiritual influences, and clothes him with a purer morality. The conquest of the mind, while it affords more pleasure, is more elevating and refining. The victories of battles, or the success of the chase, or the game, will soon pass from the remembrances of men. They will yield no permanent good to the victors, nor serve any useful purpose as examples to posterity. Not so with man, who has dared to enter the laboratory of nature, and, Prometheus-like, seize a treasure, and reveal its secret to man. Sir Isaac Newton in the discovery of the laws of gravitation, Lord Bacon in the triumph of his inductive system of philosophy, Sir Humphrey Davy in the discovery of the safety lamp, felt no doubt a glow of enthusiasm, like that of Archimedes, when he rapturously exclaimed: "I have found it; I have found it." As the light is pleasant, as the fragrance of the rose is sweet, and as the sound of music is inspiring, so is a cultivated intellect in the family circle. Nor is it necessary that it should be a man's intellect; the well-read and intelligent child may throw a fascinating splendor around its existence, that may illumine home, and arch it with a rainbow glory.

The culture of the mind, unaided by religious teaching, may lead to skepticism. Religious instruction binds the soul to God as a centre. The Sabbath-school is the centripetal force that confines the youthful mind to God, and makes it move in its legitimate orbit. The want of it is the centrifugal power that throws the soul off at a tangent from God, and makes it wander like a

comet through infinite space. Thus, Sir Humphrey Davy, Gibbon, Hume, Hobbes, Voltaire, and many others, eminent for their intellectual powers, have failed to secure the higher order of felicity. Generally, they were unhappy, notwithstanding their literary popularity, because their lives were not consecrated to God, and their labors directed to the moral and spiritual elevation of their race.

It has been observed more than once that the laboring classes are much more comfortable now than formerly ; that there is less disposition to riot and bloodshed, and that extreme profligacy is less frequent ; that Ireland, the land of rebellion and popular insurrection, is not so prolific in those volcanic passions, that so painfully ruptured the bonds of her civil authority. She has become more sedate, more orderly, more circumspect, and more law-abiding. There is very little doubt that this happy change is owing in a great measure to the education of the poor, and especially to the Sabbath-school system. As time rolls on, and as general and religious education is placed within the reach of the poorest, and as priestly domination shall subside, the moral picture of Ireland will be as agreeable for our contemplation as the fairest spot in Christendom. It is the genius of Romanism to flourish most where ignorance predominates, and to decrease where intelligence sheds its heavenly radiance. As education advances, superstition yields to reason, and reason leads to freedom of thought and government. Education among the poor does not necessarily lead to discontent. It is the instrument of happiness, and an

important step to their advancement in society. The experience of the world is, that the education of the poor brings with it mental, pecuniary, commercial and social power; that no State having once educated the poor, would on any account uneducate them, but rather increase their facilities for a higher education. The trial which has been made, both in Europe and America, in educating the poor, has proved most successful. It is prudent to educate them, as a matter of economy; for ignorance would cause more crimes, and the expenses incurred in punishing them would cost more than the money expended in their education, while society at the same time would be rendered not only more secure but more prosperous.

The progress of a nation depends upon the education of the people. Education sifts them, separates the gold from the dross, brings to our knowledge men of merit. The reason Massachusetts is so prosperous, though a small State, is, that she makes it a point to educate the poorest of her sons and daughters. She touched the true key-note of success. She knew that genius was more often allied with the poor than the rich; that education would lift them above obscurity, and that she would secure the mental gems imbedded in the depths of their minds. The consequence of this is, that she has a larger number of educated men and women, in proportion to her population, than any other State in the Union. There is no danger that educated people will forge fetters for themselves. I would by no means say that a government is safe from revolution because the people are generally well educated; for human pas-

sions will sometimes ascend the throne of reason, and launch the State into a storm ; but there is this difference, the anger will be less violent, the retribution less brutal, and the storm-beaten State will right itself with less injury. But if the people be religiously educated, as is contemplated in our Sabbath-schools, then errors will be more readily acknowledged, reformation will be more expeditiously effected, and benevolence will rush more promptly to soften the asperity of the evils. You will all agree with me that it is more economical to teach men to do right, than to punish them for doing wrong. It is better to develop their faculties than suppress them ; better to make them happy than miserable ; better to make them industrious than idle ; better to make them rich and prosperous, than poor and miserable ; better to make them Christians than infidels. Some of the most distinguished men, both in Europe and America, have risen from the lowest strata of society. They were born great, and no artificial incubus could suppress their rise. Abilities are like volcanoes. They will break through the conventional barriers of society, and public opinion will yield to the force of mental power.

Obedience to God and to existing authority, provided it be just, is the legitimate aim of a religious education. Public opinion is necessary to the support of government ; but that opinion must be founded upon the laws of equity, and not upon the capricious clamors of a fickle and ignorant rabble. A secret and influential conviction that the existing government, if administered with justice, tempered with mercy, is the

best for the general good, must have its foundation in intelligence and reason. An uneducated mind is not in a condition to decide as to the practicability or impracticability of existing laws. And hence changes in governments are more frequent among an uneducated people than among an educated one. It has ever been the history of ignorance to ally itself with anarchy and despotism. France, with all its boasted glory, presents a melancholy example of the evils of ignorance. Those popular insurrections that have so painfully disgraced her annals, were mostly instigated by rude and uneducated men. No greater evil has government to contend with than ignorance. The present age presents to us a new picture, a new era. The Sabbath-school system has been working for half a century upon the moral debris of a corrupt humanity, and the present generation in Christendom has passed through its curriculum, and is to-day reflecting the intelligence and moral sentiment of its Sabbath-school training. The present status of society, though not as good as I would wish it to be, yet owes its origin more to the Sabbath-school influence than to any other instrument, the Gospel alone excepted.

It is a singular feature in our natures, that the less religious we are, the more inclined we are to anarchy. The less the sense of moral responsibility, the stronger the love for arbitrary power. Despots and tyrants, in former times, belonged to that class of men who feared neither God nor man. Some of highly cultivated intellects, such as Gibbon, Hume, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and others, who were either atheists or infidels,

repudiated free governments, while Milton, Baxter, Owen, Robert Hall, Chalmers, Roger Williams, and many others of high intellect and sterling piety, were warm advocates of civil and religious freedom. We infer from this that exalted piety is averse to despotism, while infidelity sanctions and seeks to perpetuate it. The sooner, therefore, we can pre-occupy the youthful mind with their responsibilities to God and man, the sooner we can make them God-fearing and God-loving children, the more certain will be the progress of the Church, the higher the standard of morality, and the greater the stability of our free institutions. A scheme which contemplates these ends, surely, cannot be too highly regarded. So long as our children are trained in the knowledge of God, and habituated to the duties of piety, no fears need be entertained that we shall relapse into a state of ancient despotism. An enlightened and Christian nation will select their rulers with the same freedom that school committees select their county teachers, or churches their pastors. The divine right of kings has already been exploded, and free governments will keep pace with the advancement of literature, civilization, and Christianity. The Sabbath-school system is the substratum of our civil and religious freedom. It is not only the nursery of our churches, but also of our government. These schools infuse a healthy vigor into every department of society. They beautify, enlarge, ennoble our churches, and lay the foundation for a general prosperity. They seek, like Hercules, to strangle the hydra of ignorance, and to give freedom to the spiritually enslaved, by break-

ing the shackles of superstition, and putting to the lip of the sin-sick soul the sweet and life-giving waters of redemption. Blot out these Sabbath-schools, and in a few years an age of darkness, gloom and superstition will settle upon our land. The dark scenes of persecution and blood, that marked the age of the Crusades, will be re-enacted, and Christianity will be known only to be condemned.

Religious parents in former times could not train their children to habits of religious thought. Many of them, from the defects of their own religious training, were incompetent, and the churches thus formed were composed of materials too incongruous with the spirit of the Gospel to display the higher virtues of Christianity. Their orthodoxy was more incoherent; their schisms more frequent; their persecutions more violent, and their fanaticism more rampant. There was a want of beauty and symmetry in the ancient churches. Their zeal was great, but not according to knowledge. They sought to advance the Redeemer's kingdom, more by force than persuasion. The policy of building up vigorous and aggressive churches through the instrumentality of Sabbath-schools, had never entered their minds; and, consequently, they could boast of little vitality and spirituality. As a natural consequence, these churches sought the aid of civil government to advance their interests; and, however splendid may have been their career, their history was marked with the most shameful irregularities.

The distinction, furthermore, between the Churches now formed, and those in former times, lies in this,

viz., that the churches of the present age are more sociable. Before the Sabbath-school system became general, the poor and middle classes in the Church, who composed the workers, were seldom brought in contact with the children of the richer members. The Sabbath-school blended them for the time being; annihilated distinction; bridged up this social hiatus—the teacher and scholar lived upon terms of mutual friendship—the vanity of earthly distinction was taught to the richer pupils, and they grew up with a love for virtue, which they venerated, whether they saw it clad in the rude habiliments of the poor, or adorned in the more ornamental and fastidious trappings of the rich. Hence there is less social distinction in our churches, and all classes are brought more immediately under the full power of the Church. Such a state of things leads to higher development. We see in our churches less pride, less indolence, less schism. The aim is more elevated, the benevolence is more general and uniform, the concentration of power higher, and the efforts more intelligently directed.

It is very difficult to draw a line of distinction between those impressions made in the Sabbath-school, and those in maturer years. The character of man is made up from impressions and opinions fostered, either in youth or in manhood. As it is impossible for the whole to exist without the sum of all its parts, so it is equally impossible for a man's character to exist, as a whole, without the sum of all those impressions that made it. The Sabbath-school system is so largely influential in moulding the members of our churches,

that it is difficult to draw a line of distinction between the efforts of the preacher and the Sabbath-school instruction. They both, conjointly, have contributed to the present status of our churches. The seeds sown in the Sabbath-school are to ripen in the Church. The quality of the seeds will decide the character of the fruits. The purer the principles taught, the more distinctly and accurately they are impressed, the nobler will be the manhood. The Sabbath-schools are small, rippling streams, which widen and deepen, as the pupils advance, till they lose themselves in the deeper waters of the Church, beautifying and enhancing it with a higher membership. The moral and spiritual elevation of our churches, the vast power they are exercising, the prodigious sacrifices they are making for the good of our race, the unwearied effort they are putting forth to disseminate the truths of Christianity, attest in no ordinary degree the power of the Christian Church. This peculiar change in Churches of modern times, compared with more ancient ones, is not because of any supernatural agencies, but because the under strata of our churches in the form of Sabbath-schools are of better material, more tractable, more malleable, and boast a higher order of Scriptural intelligence.

The standard too of morality is far more elevated now than formerly. The slavish devotion to ancient institutions is gradually yielding to the advances of an enlightened civilization. Human character has evidently become refined; investigations have led to the subversion of false theories, and man is rising every

day to a sense of his own responsibility and spiritual importance. He is more free from the shackles of superstition and the trammels of antiquated opinions. He is becoming more and more conscious of his dignity—his high destiny, and he stands more upon his own merit than upon the name and reputation of his ancestors. There is a tendency in the elements that surround him to neutralize artificial distinctions. The improvement of the mind, the elegance and embellishments of refined society are not so averse to a vigorous and industrious activity. The advancement of the fine arts, the triumph of science, the moral and religious elevation of mankind, are advancing with colossal strides. We owe these great changes in part to the progress of civilization—to the freedom of the press—to the industries of nations—to the critical discussions of scientific questions; but more especially to the teachings of the Bible. A Galileo may now advocate the Copernican system without the fear of death, and a Jenner may expatiate on the advantages of inoculation without the jeer of ridicule. It is a glorious triumph for the cause of humanity, that religion and science are not inimical, but are one in purpose, the former to teach the benevolence of God to man by precept, and the latter to enforce it by demonstration.

Man is naturally avaricious. He seeks generally to advance his own good at the expense of others. He too often forgets that the happiness and prosperity of others are interwoven with his own, and that if the world could gratify its selfishness, the tenderest relations would be broken. Society would pass through

an upheaval, and the fabric of the finest government would crumble into atoms. The Sabbath-school meets this evil in its incipency. It teaches the youthful mind that love is the noblest virtue, and the more benevolent man is the more will he resemble God. This precept is carried into effect. The young are taught to give. As their little footsteps mark their accustomed way to the Sabbath-school, they bear, in their tiny purses, their offering. They give cheerfully for the heathen, for the orphan, and for the sick. This love of giving grows with their growth; and hence, when they become members of the Church, they go forward and engage in every benevolent enterprise.

The observance of the Sabbath becomes a weariness to most men, because they were not trained to a sacred remembrance of it. Their minds are either occupied on that day in diversions or recreations, or they are confined in their counting-rooms, calculating their losses and their gains; and thus the day of rest is desecrated. The young in the Sabbath schools are taught to remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. A taste for religion is thus formed, and sermons are far more relished than theatrical performances. The superficial eye is not able to perceive those delicate relations which a religious observance of the Sabbath sustains to the peace of society, to the sympathy of humanity, to the security of government, to the progress of wealth, to the expansion of commerce, and to all that constitutes civil and moral greatness. The infidel mistakes the benefits of the Sabbath when he supposes those benefits are connected only with the imagination, and are of no

practical importance. These benefits are real and not imaginary, and are often productive of immediate good. The infidel writers, however, are not the only ones who seek to bring Christianity into disrepute, and indirectly pollute the youthful mind. These writers are not many, and their books, besides, are not often placed in the hands of the young. The youth of the present age stands in danger from another source; it is the example of men and women of influential position, who studiously violate the Sabbath, and more especially those parents who are indifferent in its observance. The Christian religion would lose much of its power without the public observance of the Sabbath. No private worship could be found strong enough, though sustained by splendid talents, to invigorate and enhance its vitality. The holy plant of Christianity would not bloom with so rich a foliage, nor be so prolific in its fruits, were it taught only in the nursery. Christianity was never intended for the family alone. It is too aggressive in its nature, and too strongly impregnated with the elements of divine benevolence to be satisfied with a circumscribed influence. It may be silent for a time, but then again, it will flash out like lightning, and peal its notes in tones of thunder, or it may rave and expand with the fury of the storm. It contains an active principle, and hence it needs scope. Earth itself is too limited for the display of its powers; and hence religion connects the imagination with eternity as the proper field for the full display of its elastic powers.

A system, like the Sabbath-school, which keeps our

temples open ; which draws into the pulpit men of noted piety and talents ; which forces teachers to be prompt and accurate in learning the Scriptures ; which makes superintendents good Biblical scholars ; which extends its influence to ministers, to parents, and to churches, and which seeks to fit the soul for heaven, should command our warmest approbation. It is here, in the Sabbath-school, if any where, you are to find examples of splendid morality. We have, it is true, no ideal models of perfection to inspire our bosom to elevated effort. No imaginary standard of heroism to excite our emulation ; but we have the life of Christ and his apostles, in whom are blended all the excellencies of moral and religious greatness. Upon these, the young may build their religious character, and grow up to be representative men and women in the Church of Christ.

In the Sabbath-school, too, the sublimest of all religions is taught. It deals not in mythological fables ; but with heaven-taught truths. It does not perplex the mind with frightful images of a ghostly throng ; nor does it seek our happiness in the pomp and formalities of a heartless devotion. Its forms and ceremonies are simple, but the inner power is transforming. It demands no bodily sacrifice for sin to appease an offended Divinity. It repudiates austerity and sensuality alike. It is spiritual and holy, and constrains the indulgence of the passions. It is, generally, uniform in emotion, and prefers knowledge to extravagant zeal. It avoids questions of civil and ecclesiastical policy, and seeks the good of the individual. It teaches

forgiveness of injury—to favor, rather than to injure another—to be kind and generously affected to all mankind. The religion too taught in our Sabbath-schools is opposed to pride, to ambition, to the heroic character, as taught by Homer and Virgil. It places before us nobler examples, which the world is beginning to admire more and more. Mothers do not now point to Agamemnon, nor to Hector, nor to Æneas, as models by which to shape the character of their children, but to Christ and his apostles. The religion of the Bible will yet triumph. Nations will settle their disputes by courts and not by the sword. War shall cease, and a common bond of sympathy shall bind all nationalities.

The religion taught in our Sabbath-schools is not sectional, but like its great Author, it flows out in generous impulses to all classes ; loves all, and cherishes all, and seeks to bless all. It cautions us of the shortness of life, and modifies our affection for a world that is fleeting. It reconciles us to disappointments, and lessens our vehemence in the pursuit of pleasure. Such is the religion we teach to the young ; and if this religion had been taught to them from the introduction of Christianity the world would not have been so deluged with crime and anarchy, but would now have blossomed as the rose.

Our prospect is highly encouraging. The young are rapidly advancing in Biblical knowledge. A child now of ordinary attainments in one of our Sabbath-schools is better acquainted with Scripture than some of the priests in the olden times. The seeds of divine

truth take root more rapidly in their hearts, and the fruits of the Spirit are purer. Our teachers and superintendents are struggling to keep pace with their advancement; and churches should afford every facility to advance the qualification of teachers, that more thoroughness and accuracy may be secured. There is no book that inspires the human mind with such noble sentiments as the Bible. The precepts of the Bible are the purest. The characters of the prophets and apostles are of the noblest type, and the information the most vital. Wherever the Bible is studied the marks of improvement have been the most decided. In no case should the youthful mind be diverted from the solid and more useful reading of the Scriptures. Caution should be exercised against works of religious fiction, too many of which have already found their way into our Sabbath-schools. These books pervert the taste, and gradually diminish in the mind of the young a love for the Bible; and thus a general desire is created for works of higher fiction. Never, to my knowledge, have professors been more addicted to the habit of reading light literature, than at the present age. In some cases the foundation has been laid in our Sabbath-schools by trashy and injudicious books, published, no doubt from good motives, but unwisely selected for the young. To convert the scholar is the chief object of the Sabbath-school; to bring him immediately under holy influences; to set him at variance with the sins that would enslave him, to make his errors burdensome and oppressive to him, and thus force him to flee from the wrath to come, and take refuge in the

bosom of the Redeemer. Piety never injures, but always promotes the interest of a child ; and the sooner our children become pious the happier will be their lives, and the more glorious will be their immortality.

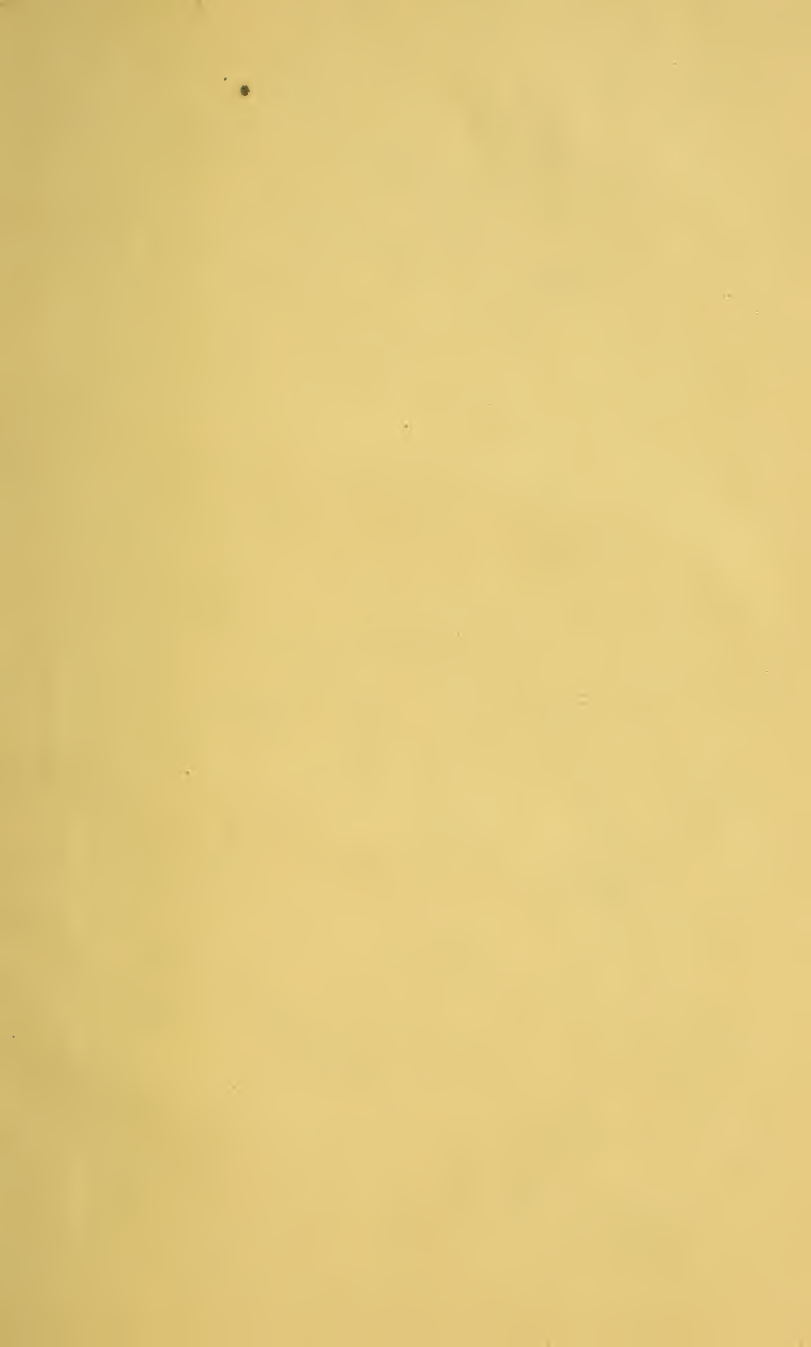
We are more than pleased at our progress. It was the wish of Franklin that he might be permitted two hundred years after his death to visit his country. If this wish could be granted how astonished would he be ! Electricity, which he bottled by means of a kite, he would now see made use of to communicate thoughts thousands of miles in a few moments. The cable across the Atlantic would overwhelm him with surprise. The railroads, the steamboats, the progress of science, the wealth, the intelligence, the numerous cities, the growth of population, would inspire his bosom with the noblest emotions of joy. And so would it be with Raikes, the founder of the Sabbath-school system, could he rise from the dead and see the tens of thousands of children hastening on with hurried steps to their respective schools ; the progress they are making ; the vast amount of literature published for their benefit, and the onward moving tide of this youthful humanity into the bosom of the Church, to replenish, strengthen, and adorn it with a higher membership. He would feel his bosom glow with ecstasy, and thank God that he ever began so noble a work. In Europe and America the cause of Sabbath-schools is advancing. Every day strength is gained. The kingdom of Christ is verging to the zenith of its glory. Our churches are expanding into holier proportions. The mission of Christ is advancing to its consummation, the Star of

Bethlehem is shining with more than its primeval lustre, and the angels of heaven have already seized their harps, waiting to usher in the dawn of the millenium.

“Come, let our voices join
In joyful songs of praise ;
To God, the God of love,
Our thankful hearts we'll raise :
To God alone all praise belongs—
Our earliest and our latest songs.

“Within these hallowed walls
Our wandering feet are brought,
Where prayer and praise ascend,
And heavenly truths are taught ;
To God alone your offerings bring ;
Let young and old his praises sing.

“Lord, let this work of love
Be crowned with full success :
Let thousands, yet unborn,
Thy sacred name here bless ;
To thee, O Lord, all praise to thee
We'll raise throughout eternity.”





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